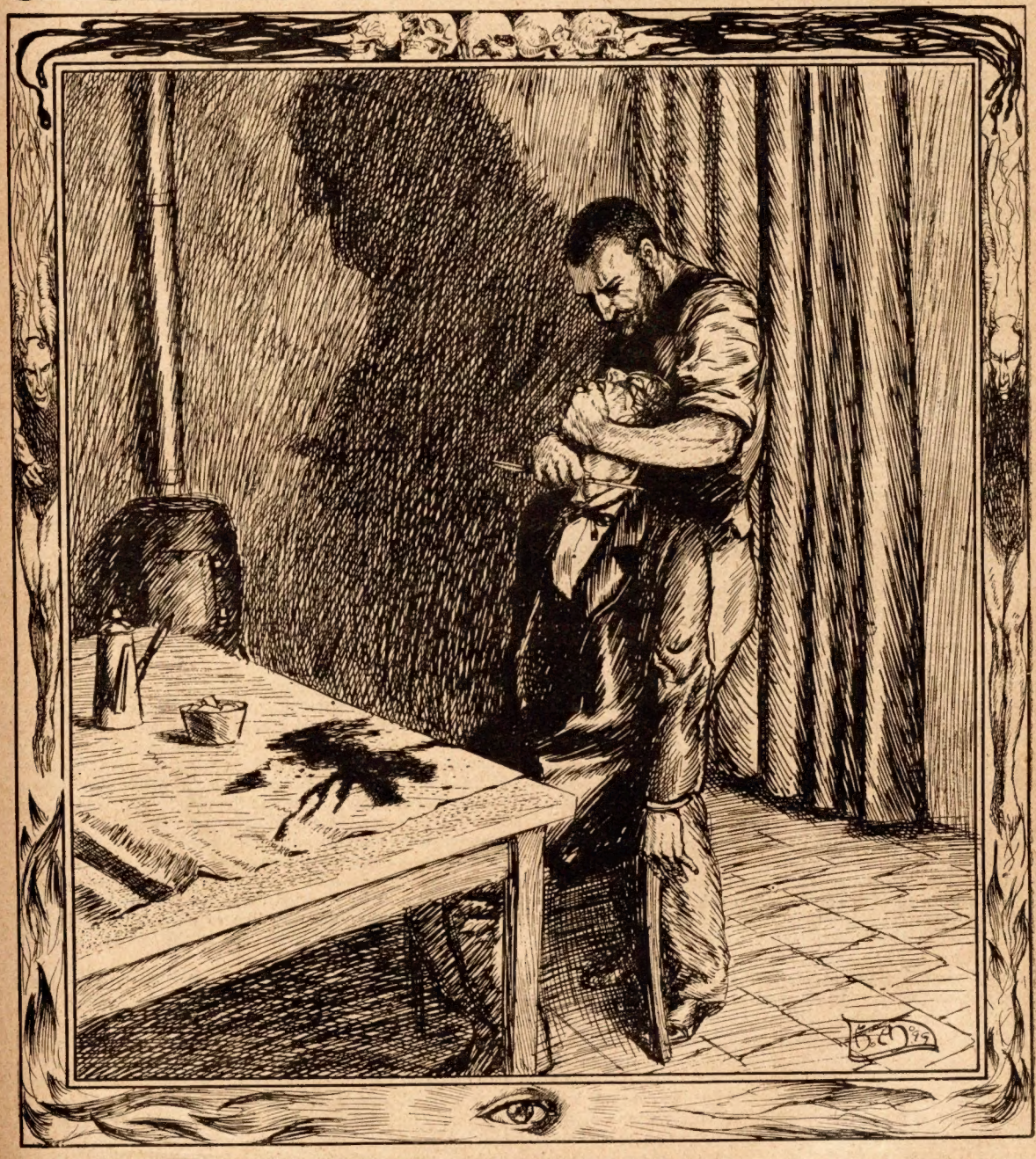
POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY



VOIRBO BEHEADS HIS VICTIM.

Vol. III.—No. 31.

"To be left alone
And face to face with my own crime has been
Just retribution."

—LONGFELLOW, "Masque of Pandora."

PART IV.

AFTER Voirbo's unexpected and sensational arrest, M. Macé ordered him to be thoroughly searched from head to foot. In the pocketbook was a receipt for a passage ticket, taken in the name of Tabra, and on inquiry at the steamboat agency it was ascertained that a man answering the prisoner's description had that day purchased a ticket for Havre.

Voirbo was then taken to the Préfecture and brought before the instructing judge; but he remained defiant and refused to answer all questions, declaring that it was for the police to establish his guilt. He was not inclined to give them any assistance.

"We shall establish it soon enough for you, M. Voirbo," remarked Macé. "At present I have other matters of importance to attend to. Let him be strictly watched; he is dangerous."

The commissaire drove straight to Voirbo's rooms, where he found his newly-married wife—the wife who had brought him £600—a delicate-looking woman. She had never heard of Désiré Bodesse. Her money was kept in a strong-box, but, with her permission, Macé forced it. The box was empty. Madame imagined that the £400 that her husband had brought (the money stolen) was there. All had gone. He learned from madame that Voirbo's portion was in Italian stocks.

Now came the question what had become of those bonds? He searched high and low, but nothing of much importance was found. A number of papers reporting crimes, and particularly those containing the accounts of the Rue Princesse discovery, were in his apartments. In the workroom were found several dangerous instruments, amongst them two pairs of huge shears, a mallet, a big butcher's cleaver, some railway labels (like that observed by Ringué and his comrade on the night of December 22nd), and a hank of cord, similar to what the parcels had been tied with.

Then Macé descended to the cellar. There was nothing remarkable there, only a couple of casks of wine. But on close examination the officer noticed a bung in one was protruding, to which was attached a piece of black string. Drawing this out, he discovered attached to the end was a small tin canister, the top of which was soldered down. When the lid was forced open, there, sure enough, were the securities, less one, that had belonged to Désiré Bodesse.

That was a good day's work, and M. Macé returned to his offices, where he had left Voirbo. He felt now that the net was closing around him, and that a very little more would complete the evidence. What he desired to prove at this stage was the dismemberment, and Voirbo's actual handiwork. This was difficult, but he had an idea, and meant to carry it out the very next day.

Inquiries made of the people who lived in the same house in the Rue Mazarine elicited the fact that a strong smell of carbolic was observed coming from his room towards the end of December, but that was, if suggestive, not much evidence as to crime.

But he had a trump card to play, and meant doing it without further delay. In the meanwhile, Macé thought it judicious to let Voirbo know that the money has been discovered, and that he is suspected as the individual who bought the steamboat ticket. This electrified him, and prepared him for a bad night's rest at the police station of the Place St. Sulpice, to which he was conducted.

On the following morning, at eleven o'clock, M. Macé calls at the house 47, Rue Mazarine, in order to look at the apartment formerly occupied by Voirbo, and where he is satisfied the murder was committed. Accompanying him was Madame Pertant, who, it will be remembered, was Voirbo's charwoman. He had also instructed Ringué and Champy to bring Voirbo on and meet them at 11.30.

Entering the room, he finds it occupied by a young married couple, fishmongers of the Market of St. Germain. Explaining everything to them, he, with the assistance of the charwoman, arranges the furniture in as nearly as possible the order as it was when she came in on the morning when Voirbo had cleaned the floor. It will be necessary only to say that there was a strong table in the centre, and the bedstead in an alcove. As soon as the room was arranged, and the lodgers had, at the request of M. Macé, retired, Voirbo arrived with his two guardians, who had brought him in a carriage which they had left some distance away, and walked to the house.

The prisoner was ordered to sit on a chair near the fireplace, Ringué and Champy standing on each side of him. Voirbo was looking disinterestedly upon the scene of his former life, and glancing curiously about him. He saw nothing in the room which could for an instant prove evidence against him, and that seemed to satisfy him.

"You say, Madame Pertant, that the only space which would allow two persons to move conveniently was that surrounding the table?" said Macé. "Very well. Now, then, if Bodesse were murdered in his room it would be possibly upon this side of the table, and there would be, in all probability, a considerable effusion of blood. Now, there seems to be a slope in this floor where the tiles are laid. Hand me that jug of water. I am going to pour it on the ground; wherever that flows so must the blood from the dead man have gone—of course, always providing that the deed was committed here." And Macé kept his eyes fixed sternly upon Voirbo as he emptied the water from the jug and it trickled along over the tiles like so many little snakes all making for the same place, near to the alcove, where it formed a pool.

Voirbo's face immediately changed. He could scarcely keep his seat, he trembled so, and his hands clenched spasmodically, whilst his face turned ashy pale.

M. Macé did not fail to notice the effect upon the accused. He ordered the water to be sponged up as dry as possible, and a mason who was in attendance was instructed to take up about a dozen tiles where the water had settled. This was quickly done, and there was found a black, sticky-looking substance underneath—undoubtedly blood which had run through the interstices of the tiles. A quantity of this, together with the tiles, were placed in a bag, and

M. Macé affixed the official seal so that it could be sent in due course for analysis.

This clever discovery, coming so suddenly before the assassin, finished him. He then and there confessed the crime, promising to give M. Macé full particulars if he would only take him away from the scene of his foul deed.

He accordingly left with Ringué and Champy, followed by Macé.

Now comes an episode in this tragedy which, had it succeeded, would have shorn it of all its dramatic effect, and ruined the splendid work that the great French detective had accomplished. Let it be told in M. Macé's own words as near as possible.

"Leaving Voirbo's old lodgings where I had achieved so much, and had wrung the confession from the villain's own lips, I followed Ringué and Champy, who had the prisoner between them, and were walking quietly towards the Place Buci, where they had left the four-wheel cab in which they had conveyed him, and in which he was to be taken to the station-house. I could watch them plainly from where I stood, and, seeing them reach the cab, was about to turn away in another direction, when, for some unaccountable reason, I thought I would walk towards them and see him safely installed in the vehicle. As I approached, Champy opened the door, and Ringué stood beside.

"It is not always judicious for a Frenchman even to be polite, and when I saw my man handing the prisoner into the vehicle first, I quickened my footsteps. I felt that Voirbo, knowing the game was up, might do something desperate, and I saw at the same time that Champy was giving him every chance.

"The assassin stepped in, when, to my horror and surprise, instead of seating himself, before Champy had had time to get in he had opened the door upon the other side and jumped out. In an instant I sprang forward, and in a few seconds was beside the vehicle. Voirbo, as fleet as a hare pursued by hounds, made off, the two police officers in hot pursuit. He had a start of about twenty yards, and nobody seemed to realise what had happened. Jumping up beside the driver, I lashed the horse and shouted at the top of my voice, 'Stop the murderer! Stop the murderer!'

"In a minute the street was in a commotion, a hundred people running after him, but nobody tried to stop him as he passed them. He was going very swiftly in the middle of the street. The two officers were, however, gaining upon him, and we were coming up close, when a great dog flew out and caught Ringué by the leg, and he fell.

"I could see by this time what were the intentions of Voirbo. He was making for the river—the Seine being quite close—intending to commit suicide if he could get there first. Champy had the same opinion, for I noticed that he was unbuttoning his tunic, and had already unstrapped his sword, and let it fall in the road. Rather than lose his prey, he meant plunging in after him. Just as the murderer had reached the Quai de Conti, an omnibus got into his way, and he jumped aside to avoid it, and, as luck would have it, slipped and rolled over on the footway exhausted, and quite out of breath. Champy was on him in an instant, and kept him on the ground until plenty of assistance arrived. It was an exciting time, although, of course, there was really no possibility of escape. Yet he might have managed to reach the Seine.

"He was then taken in the cab to the police station, and I gave special instructions that he was to be watched closely until the Monday, when I should send for him."

On that day the miserable man was taken to the office of the commissary for further examination before being brought before M. Douet d'Arcq, the Juge d'Instruction. He had refused to have his photograph taken, and Macé was particularly anxious to have his portrait, for he felt confident that Voirbo was the author of other crimes, equally tragic, but committed under other names and in other parts of France. Determined to obtain a likeness of him, he had asked his friend, M. Clésinger, the well-known sculptor, to attend, and arranged that he should be placed in a position where he could get a good view of the prisoner without being observed. This ruse came off very successfully, and the artist produced some excellent pictures, for he had an unusual opportunity of studying the different expressions of the criminal's face during his full confession, which, in all its terrible details, will presently be given.

After the exciting chase, and the terrible ordeal he had undergone at his lodgings, there was little wonder that his nervous system—strong as it was—had been affected, and

Noticed a bung was projecting.

at first when he was brought into M. Macé's room he was quite unable to speak. The commissary ordered him some refreshments, and he was taken, closely guarded, into the garden for half an hour, and then brought back, for it seems that the detective was very kind and considerate to even the worst of his charges.

Macé said, "Now, M. Voirbo, do you think that you are well enough to answer my questions, and to look through the few articles which I have brought from your house?"

Voirbo said that he was still very weak, but that he would do his best to answer.

"First of all, then, let me show you the articles I have brought from the Rue Lamartine. See, here is everything, even the Italian bonds which you stole from the murdered man, and which I found hidden in the cask of wine."

Voirbo looked dazed, and wanted to know how it was

that the commissary had thought of looking there for them. He was told by Macé, with a gentle smile playing over his countenance, that that part of the business belonged to him. The detective added, "Now, you see, I have obtained every bit of evidence necessary to convict you, and it will be much better for you to make a clean breast of the whole thing."

"I will," said the unhappy wretch in an unnatural tone of voice.

"Proceed, then; and begin by telling us something about yourself. I will not interrupt you," said the commissary, taking his seat.

"Well, you must first of all know that Voirbo is not my name, and I will not tell you the right one—at least, not for the present. I am a natural son; but I know my father, and am not proud of doing so. Everybody, even my wife, believes that I am an orphan, but that is not so. Both my parents are alive. I know my mother, and I love her, and she idolises me in spite of all my wickedness. My father is a bad man, and, when I was a child, was always beating me and his wife, my mother. When he was very angry, he would swear that he would certainly kill me at one time or another. I felt so revengeful that over and over again I tried to kill him; but he was always on his guard, for he knew that I would do it if I had a chance. At last I could stand it no longer, and I left home."

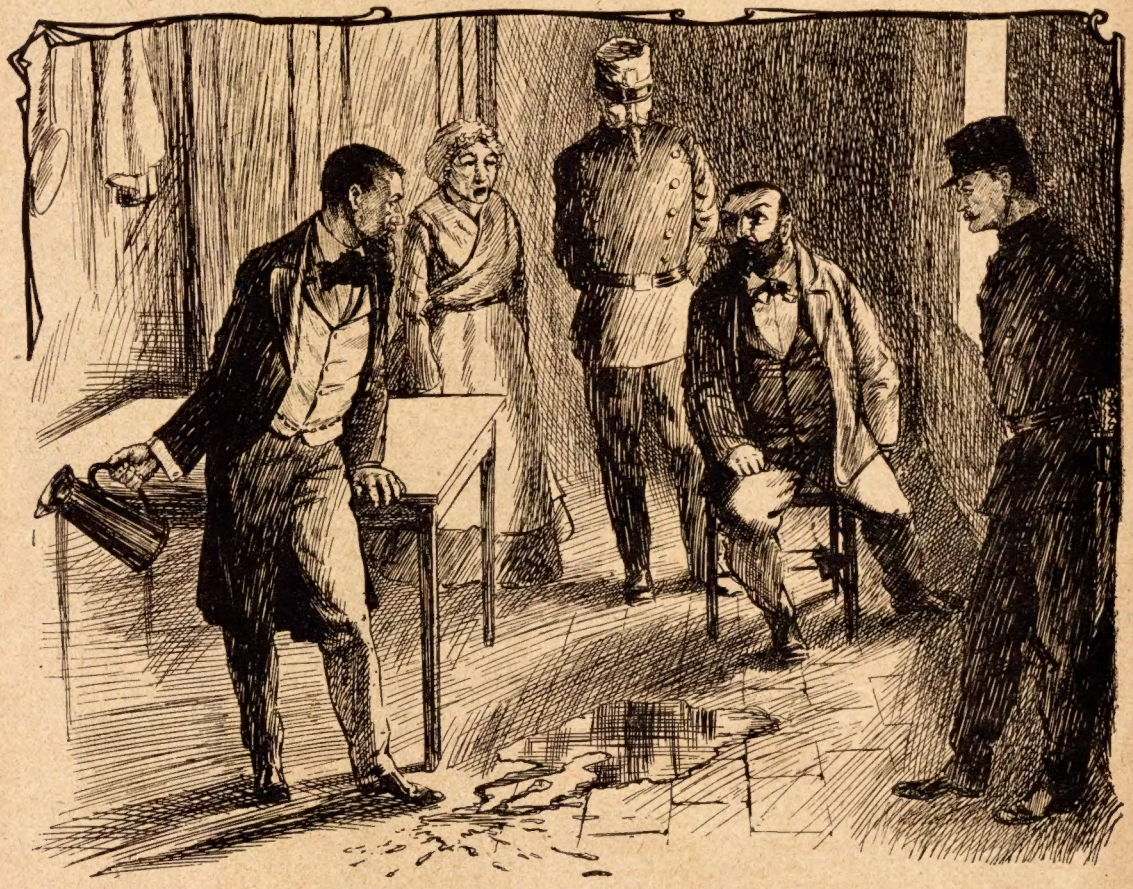
"What did you do when you left your parents' house?" asked Macé, as Voirbo made a long pause, as if dreaming of the unhappiness of his early life.

"I have been fighting with life, trying to get a living one way or another, by good or bad means. I was ambitious. I felt that I had been neglected, that I was nothing, and I longed to be something, and knew not how. I wanted to be rich and enjoy the luxuries of the world. I never had a start. But I thought at last I should have one after my marriage with Rémondé's daughter. I felt that it would give me a better standing in life, and that being near her, who is so good, it would make me an honest man—that I should be able to redeem my faults, or rather my crimes."

Then Voirbo's brows knitted and his expression was hateful; all his evil mind was shown upon his countenance as he proceeded, "If that old miser, Désiré had lent me his money I should not have killed him, and should have paid him back every penny.

"But I had said to the family of Rémondé that I had that £400 to place with the money brought by the woman I married. It was the price of my marriage. When he (Désiré) refused me, curse him, I thought to murder him!"

"In your rooms?" interrupted Macé.



HE EMPTIED THE WATER FROM THE JUG.

"Yes, yes; you have the proofs. In my rooms," Voirbo said, without hesitation.

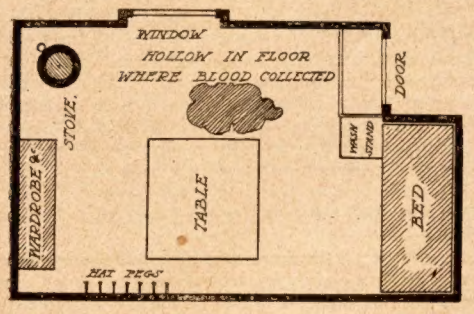
"How did you proceed? Tell me," said the commissary, placing his face between his hands and resting his elbows upon the table in an attitude of settled attention.

"On Monday, December 14 last, Désiré Bordesse and I went together to the restaurant in the Rue Grégoire-la-Tours and dined. After dinner I asked him to come and have a cup of tea with me in my rooms. He willingly assented, for he frequently visited me there; not so much, I believe, for my society, but because the old libertine wished to make appointments with the girls who were working for me there.

"On that particular night I had told him that my intended wife would be there with her relations, so he came more readily."

Again the wretched man made a long pause as he looked into vacancy. "Yes," he continued; "by that time

I had thoroughly made up my mind to kill him. As soon as he had entered the room, he took a seat near the table. Without saying a word, I took up one of my flat-irons and



Plan of Voirbo's Room.

passed quickly behind him and gave him a blow on the head with it. Yes; the aim was a good one and the iron heavy. His head fell down upon the table, and his arms swung at his sides, and he did not utter a sound. I was quite surprised and satisfied with my work. Then, blowing out the lights, I opened the windows and pulled down the blinds. In the silence and obscurity I was listening to know if he would move. I could hear nothing but the drip, drip, drip of the blood falling upon the floor.

"I remained motionless, holding my breath. Then I heard a sound like a long-drawn sigh, then a slight creak of the chair. My God! Désiré was moving! He was not dead, then! Was he going to scream?

"That thought brought me back all my wits.

"Relighting a little lamp, I saw that the body had been moving. Yes! yes! He was still living, but not in a state for screaming. Then I thought that his agony might last a long time, and I did not bargain to see him suffer. What should I do?

"A thought came swiftly into my brain. I took a razor. I could hear my heart beat, but I knew that I must finish the job. Getting behind him, I raised his head by placing my hand under his chin, and the light fell full upon his face, which was covered with blood. His eyes were wide open and very bright. They seemed to glare with horror at the razor I held in my hand. I then pressed it firmly and drew it from left to right. The blade disappeared entirely into the flesh, and in another second I had nearly severed the head from the body as it fell over the back of the chair, showing a great gaping wound. The last breath of Désiré came through the opening I had made, and a small jet of blood spurted into the sugar-basin upon the table.

"Then I let the corpse glide down upon the floor. Fearing to be seen from the opposite side of the street, I put a blanket up before the window. Not to get blood on my clothes, I took off everything but my drawers and my socks, and then, taking a basin and a sponge, I commenced to wipe up the blood which had spurted upon every side.

"After having placed the body on a board I looked at what I had done. Death had finished my work. I ripped up his clothes with my large shears, but the legs were always in my way, so I cut them off at the knees with the sharp butcher's chopper you found—not by hacking, but I struck the back of it with a heavy piece of wood. I placed the legs in a box in the cupboard. Oh, how heavy they were! Then, as I went on with my task, the head kept swinging from side to side and seemed to have life in it. With blood smeared all over the face, it looked horrible, so I cut it off completely, and took it in my hands for a minute. My God! I can see it now! What a terrible thing! Then I put it in a basin, with the face downwards, that I should not see it.

"Next I severed the arms and took as much skin off them and the breast as I could, for I thought that if I threw them in the water the flesh would have more the appearance of an animal's. Opening the belly with a knife, I took the inside out, carrying the liver, the heart, and so on, to the water closet near to my room door and cast them down. It was a long job to cut the body into small pieces, but I did it and placed them in the large box with the legs.

"My God! what a lot of blood! How can a body hold so much? I cut his clothes to pieces and burned them in the great fire I had made together with those of mine which were spotted, using for fuel the board and the chair, which were stained.

HE WAS GOING VERY SWIFTLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET.

"Oh! what a winter's night was that! Although the fire blazed in the room, I shivered and felt my hands so cold that I could hardly hold the shears. There is no concierge

Then I put it in a basin.

where I lived, so I could get pails and pails of water without being noticed, and I worked and worked for hours.

"I stopped in the room all the following day. I had not strength to leave, but the next night I went out and threw the pieces everywhere. The legs I disposed of on the night of December 21, in what manner you know, for I am the man with the hams who was stopped by your officers.

"Now, you have the story of my crime in all sincerity, M. Macé." And Voirbo leant back in his chair and closed his eyes.

"But you have not told me what you did with the head," observed the commissary.

"Oh, that is in a safe place," replied Voirbo. "You will find it in the Seine, near the Pont de la Concorde. I melted a quantity of lead in the large ladle you found and poured it into the mouth and ears, so that it would not float in the water, and threw it over the bridge at two o'clock one morning."

"But why did you murder Désiré? You could have robbed him of his money without taking his life," said Macé.

"No," was the reply; "if he had been robbed he would certainly have accused me at once, and I should not have been able to marry. I was a fool not to have got away as soon as I suspected that the police were after me. I ought to be now in New York, near my first wife, whose name was Helen Ball, and who was an Englishwoman. I can tell it now. I am a bigamist."

"What did you say has become of your first wife?" asked the commissary.

"She is in prison in New York for picking pockets. She was very clever at the game," answered Voirbo calmly.

"Well, Voirbo," said Macé, "I am now going to take you to the Préfecture du Police, under good escort, for you are a dangerous man. I am sorry to say that since I made your acquaintance on February 13, although I have followed you step by step, I have in vain looked for some honesty in your nature. Regret, remorse—you have neither. You say you have murdered Bordasse in order to marry Mdlle. Rémondé, but you do not even care for your second wife. All your love is for the first—a thief, who has passed half her life in prison. I shall meet you again at your trial. Au revoir, M. Voirbo!"

There is but little more to add to this terrible crime that still holds a conspicuous place in the French annals. Throughout the whole of its investigation the unexpected was always happening. And so it was up to the last.

M. Macé had done his work smartly and with an unusual amount of intelligence, and, of course, being a young man, had created no end of jealousy. But he went on in the even tenor of his way, and had certainly made a lasting impression at headquarters.

Voirbo was sent down to the prison at Mazas, after his preliminary examination, to await his trial and verdict. But a description of the last scene of all will be described best by taking a leaf or two out of the leading actor's, M. Macé's, diary.

On Thursday, March 4, at eleven o'clock in the morning,

Drew it across his throat

M. Macé was working in his office. Champy came to tell him that a lady, dressed in black, with veil, wished to speak to him, but she refused to give her name. The officer was ordered to let her in. In a minute after Mdme. Voirbo

came in, and was offered a chair, into which she sank. Pulling her veil up the commissary scarcely knew her. She had aged ten years in a few days. Pale, black beneath the eyes, and her face seamed with lines, she looked a woman of forty or fifty.

"You have been so kind, monsieur, that I did not hesitate to ask you to render me another service," she said, in a faint trembling voice.

"What can I do for you, madame?" asked Macé.

"I have neither the courage nor the strength to see to the funeral arrangements of my—M. Voirbo."

"What, madame! The funeral of Voirbo! Is he dead?" asked M. Macé, with surprise.

"Certainly, monsieur; read this," handing him a note.

The commissary took the letter, which had the official mark upon it, and read the following:

"Thursday, March 4, 1869.

"The governor of the prison of Mazas begs Madame Voirbo, 26, Rue la Martin, to come and identify the body of her husband, Pierre Voirbo, who died in this house, and to make arrangements for the funeral. If this is not done at once the body will be interred by the authorities.

(Signed) "THE GOVERNOR."

Macé's astonishment was undisguised. He told madame that he would obey her wishes and save her all the trouble and pain he could. He would at once go to the prison and arrange matters, for he was anxious to learn the cause of this sudden death, which, possibly, he would have heard nothing about until a day or so later.

With sincere gratitude, the poor, heart-broken woman withdrew, and Macé drove at once to the prison of Mazas, which faces the Lyons railway station.

There he learned the extraordinary end of this vile criminal. It appears that after his preliminary examination he was sent down to the prison. Under his arm he carried a long loaf of bread, permitted at that time until prisoners had passed through the offices of the prisons and had their clothes changed, for they were only searched for instruments with which they could do damage.

Whilst Voirbo with about a dozen others were standing ready to pass to their respective cells and to have their names entered, the assassin broke the loaf in half and took from the centre the blade of a razor, and in the presence of the other prisoners drew it across his throat so effectually that he dropped upon the floor and expired almost immediately.

At the time it was supposed to be a mystery, but I am satisfied in my own mind that he was allowed to despatch himself in this manner, for it must be remembered that he was a political spy, and he might have spoken some things openly in connection with the Empire which were better unsaid.

Anyway it was a tragic finish to the story of a crime the like of which has never been equalled for its horrors, its desperate character, and for the brilliancy displayed in its detection by the young commissaire, M. Macé, who was destined to play a leading part in the detection of crime. We will in due time recount other of his exploits in this direction, all equally interesting to this one, which have so far never been adequately described in our own language.

Some Good Advice.

MR. DUNNING was once laying down a legal point before Lord Mansfield, when the latter exclaimed: "Oh, if that be law, Mr. Dunning, I may burn my law-books!"

"Better read them, my lord," was the ready reply.

The Two Boxes.

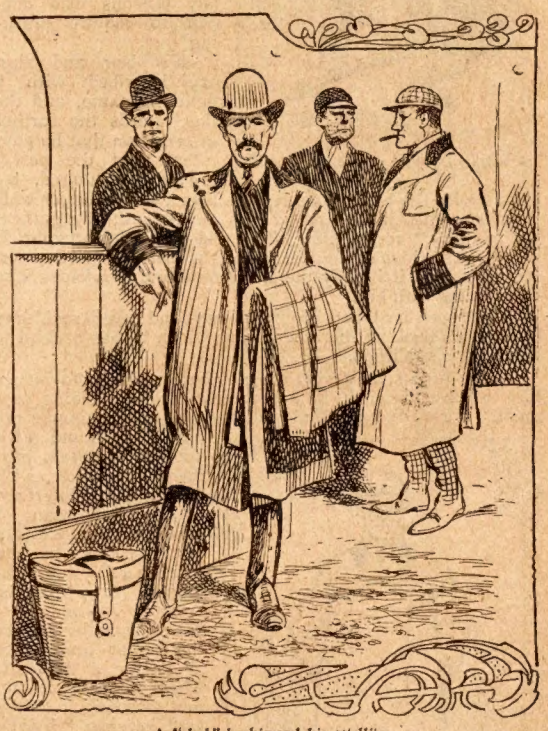
BARON THOMSON, of the Court of Exchequer, was once asked how he got on in his court when sitting between Chief Baron Macdonald and Baron Graham. He replied, "What between snuff-box on one side, and chatter-box on the other, we get on pretty well."

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

XVII.—SWINDLERS OF THE RACECOURSE.

RACECOURSES have always been the happy hunting grounds of many of the smartest rogues in existence. No race-meeting is without its quota of pickpockets and watch-snatchers, but the methods of these gentry we have already fully described. It is with the swindlers who make race-meetings, and the people who attend them, their special prey, that we are now concerned.

Of course there are many places where the courses are closed, at which these swindlers are barred, for special detectives are on the look out for them, and prevent them from entering. At other courses, however, where there is no



A "dud" bookie and his satellites.

admission fee, the rogues are free to go where they like, the rings alone being barred to them if they are known, and it is at these places that they reap a rich harvest.

Many of the men who go to racecourses are blessed with but little common sense. They imagine that horse racing is a royal road to wealth, that they have only to bet and to win. The difference between them and the real sportsman—the man who frequents the turf for the love of the "great game," is as the difference between chalk and cheese.

The mug is the victim of all the rogues who set eyes upon him.

First and foremost on the racecourse comes the "welsher," who practises at practically every open meeting. Even on the classic Epsom Downs he is to be seen, and after Derby Day the local magistrates as a rule have to deal with half a dozen or more of the kidney who have been caught red handed. For each of those captured, however, it is pretty safe to say that a dozen have escaped.

The "welsher's" impudence is simply monumental. He

"stands up" (makes a book) at a meeting with as much confidence as if he were betting with the whole of the funds of the Bank of England and the National Exchequer thrown in at his back. One would imagine from his appearance that he was able to pay out a few millions, whereas in many cases his limit is a few shillings.

A welsher ready for the "Flat" market.

Even if he could afford to pay, it is doubtful whether he would, because, leading the precarious existence he does, he never knows the minute when he may find himself invested with the order of the "knock," and worth little more than the clothes he stands up in.

On the course he takes his stand, with his clerk (who shares in the spoil) and perhaps a few of the "boys," and forthwith commences to "lay" for the benefit of any pigeons who happen to require plucking.

His bag and sign are inscribed with a fictitious name, and the flag affords the further information that he pays "first past the post." Leather-lunged, he shouts with the best. As a rule he lays a shade longer odds than other pencillers, and by this means naturally gathers the "mugs" round him. The wide-awake sportsman is always suspicious of the man who is prepared to give generous odds, and it is only the simpletons and avaricious who do business with him.

The "welsher" bets promiscuously, and never troubles to balance his book on the race during which he has decided to bolt with his takings.

If the profits, however, are not large enough to induce him to leave the pitch, he has other modes of avoiding payment. A race has just finished, and the lucky winners are crowding round the bookies to obtain payment. A punter, with the airy indifference of a blasé man of the world, presents his ticket to the "welsher," and demands a "tenner from so-and-so." The swindler takes the ticket and looks at it for a moment. Then, tearing it up, and throwing it on the turf, he says, "That's no good; you didn't get that from me." The punter may expostulate till all's blue, but the bookie declines to pay, and, what is more, does not part.

Same worthy ready for the "Sloping Stakes."

Another dodge is worked by the "boys," who are mainly recruited from the ranks of retired bruisers and hooligans. The punter presents his ticket, but before the bookmaker can get hold of it, a hand reaches up from somewhere in the crowd, and snatches the piece of pasteboard, which instantly disappears. Again the winner is badly left, for the backer is unable to draw his lawful gains without the ticket, which is the receipt for his stake. If he protests too loudly, the "boys" are likely to set about him, and the threatening appearance of some of these gentry is quite sufficient for the punter, who, as a rule, departs quietly and disconsolately.

Supposing, however, the "snatcher" is not quick enough, and the punter manages to get his ticket into the hands of the bookmaker, and their little game is marked. The "welsher" ostentatiously counts out the money, instructs his clerk to put "paid" to the account in the book, and places the cash in one of the outstretched hands. But the hand that receives the money is not that of the backer. It is that of one of the "boys," who has been on the look-out for an incident of this sort, and has at once taken advantage of the opportunity afforded. If the punter asks for his money, the "welsher," equal to the occasion, remarks that he has already paid on ticket No. so-and-so, and in support of his contention shows his book with the word "paid" pencilled against the bet. The punter declares that if the bet has been paid he has not received, whereat the "bookie" rejoins "That's no fault of mine. You must look after your own affairs. Why not bring your mammy with you?"

The "boys" have other uses, however. A backer who has been fleeced very often becomes demonstrative, and threatens to break up the concern. If he does, he speedily finds that some of the "boys" are keeping him close company. These latter for the most part are retired pugilists, or bullies of the worst description, and if the punter is wise, he lets well alone, and puts up with his loss. If, however, he is as green as grass, he continues his argument with the bookmaker, and then, with his pockets turned inside out, and sundry bruises on various parts of his body, he leaves the field a sadder, and, maybe, a wiser man. The "boys" do not stand on ceremony. If a man "asks for it," they promptly deal "it" out to him, and "it," we may remark, is, as a rule, a singularly brutal assault.

The hooligan with the water pail.

Then there is the other "welsher," who works either single-handed or with one confederate, who acts as his clerk. His methods are not so artistic as those of the man just described, but more often than not they are successful, and after all that is his main consideration. Out-of-the-way country meetings are the resort of these swindlers, but sometimes they play the game at greater gatherings, even taking their stand at Epsom. Little mercy is meted out to the "welsher" of this description when he is caught on the course. A cry is raised by his victims, and in a very few seconds the unfortunate beggar is being chivied hither and thither by a crowd, all eager for his money or his blood. They frequently get both, and the police step in to claim the carcass. No one except people of his own stamp sympathises with the "welsher." On a racecourse, every backer, whether he has been victimised or not, takes a hand in breaking up the swindler. Those who have not fallen in with a "welsher" think that their escape is due to their own astuteness, and filled with righteous indignation they are more angry than those who have lost their money.

"The bleating of the kid excites the tiger," and the cry of "welsher" excites the small betting man to a perfect frenzy of rage. Unless the police happen to be in very strong force at the particular spot, it goes hard indeed with the swindler, who is lucky if he escapes with a whole skin. He may certainly depend upon a very sore body.

It is for this reason that the particular class of "welsher," whose doings we are describing, takes great precautions to provide himself with a fairly safe line of retreat.

He perfects his plans immediately he arrives on the course, and if his star is in the ascendant, the end of the day finds him a much richer man than he was first thing in the morning. If the reverse is the case, he is either "kipping" in a ditch, trying to ease the pain of his many bruises, or else

sleeping the sleep of the unjust on the plank bed of the local police station.

Of course, he works with a partner, who naturally shares his profits and his misfortunes. There are never any losses, for they have nothing to lose. One of the two men acts as the bookmaker, the other poses as his clerk. They ape the methods of the honest metallician, making a small and carefully-balanced book on the small races which precede the big event of the afternoon. On these races they confine themselves to trifling debts, and pay out their losses with perfect equanimity, thus gaining the confidence of the "pigeons," whom they have made up their minds to pluck.

Then when the time of the chief race arrives, the pair suddenly become speculative to a degree. They cheerfully lay to all comers, and by offering longer odds than the honest "bookies," manage to get plenty of patrons. They hand out the "briefs," and book the wagers, and shout the odds with the best until the cry, "They're off!" rings down the course. Books are shut with a snap, and everyone's attention is diverted to the stretch of turf on which the horses are striving for victory. Excitement runs high for all but our two swindlers, whose hearts, however, probably beat a little faster as they commence their retreat.

Quickly and unostentatiously they edge away from the immediate vicinity of the course, and as soon as they get to a spot where they are free from observation, off comes the false moustache, or else one is put on, the white topper is thrown away, a cap taking its place; whilst the loud-checked coat, made reversible for this special purpose, is turned inside out, and thus easily converted into a less noticeable and more common garment. If these changes are carried out successfully, the "welsher" and his pal are practically safe from detection, and they leave the scene of their labours with enough money to keep them going for a little while, as well as some to put by to provide for their "winter's keep." On the other hand, detection, as we have indicated, means cruel physical punishment, with a "follow," as they say in the cook-shops, of imprisonment.

The "welsher" is undoubtedly the most conspicuous of turf swindlers, but he is by no means the smartest. That distinction must be accorded to the "tell-the-tale men," who only frequent the rings and enclosures, and keep themselves well outside the clutches of the law. They are invariably well-dressed, plausible of tongue, full of racing information, and ever ready to fleece the "flat." These men are keen students of human nature, and they rarely mistake their man. They can tell the racing novice at a distance, and once they get near him they stick to him like flies to a treacle-pot. As a rule, their victims have not sufficient sense to come in out of the wet when it rains, and it is as easy to rob them as it is to fall off a log. "Bumberees," another name for the species, work in companies of two, three, or four. From top to toe their appearance smacks of the racing-stable, and their talk suggests that they are animated "Ruff's Guides to the Turf." They appear to know the form of every horse coloured on the card; they speak familiarly of trainers and jockeys, as well as of owners, and though they have never spoken to any of these people in their lives, and are never likely to, the "jay" is led to believe that the "tell-the-tale men" are in close personal touch with the leading men on the turf.

A pigeon having been found, one of the gang proceeds to scrape an acquaintance with him—an easy matter on a race-course, especially with the idiot who, with a little surplus cash and no brains, is visiting the meeting for the purpose of adding to his store of wealth, and flatters himself that he is a very "wide" merchant indeed.

Mr. Sharp introduces himself to Mr. Flat, and at once suggests a drink. After this the pair return to the ring, where the pencillers are busy shouting the odds on the next race. Naturally, the chances of the various horses are discussed by the pair, but Mr. Sharp, though expressing some decided opinions as to the merits of some of the animals, pretends to have an open mind as to the probable winner. With many winks and nods, he suggests that he has an idea that certain horses—the favourite as a rule—are not "trying," and adds that he is not going to back anything until he hears from a friend—Swindler No. 2—who, he insists, is a personal friend of several of the owners, or with So-and-So, naming one of the most prominent jockeys engaged in the race. "He's sure to hear what's 'going'" (that is the horse which will win), goes on the sharp, who persuades the flat not to back anything then, but to await the advice of the man in the know. So the pair continue their talk, the swindler flattering his intended victim by pretending to agree with all the opinions he advances.

Then, just as the numbers go up, Mr. Sharp sees his confederate, and hails him with, "Teddy, old man, I've been looking for you." The flat, who has been told to be seen and not heard, at once takes a lively interest in the proceedings. "What's the good thing?" asks Sharp of Teddy, and the latter, instead of replying, affects to be annoyed at the presence of the flat. His anger, however, quickly vanishes on Mr. Sharp's intimation that his friend is "Isle o' Wight." And then, in a stage whisper, and with much show of mystery, he explains that the race is as good as over, and that Flyaway, or whatever the horse happens to be, is bound to win. With the air of a man to whom "ponies" are as plentiful as blackberries in September, he announces that he has backed the horse to win him £320, or some other fancy sum, whereat Mr. Sharp produces a £10 note (Bank of Engraving, not Bank of England) and says, "Put this on for me." Turning to the flat, he adds, "You had better do the same." But, if the latter professes that such a stake is too high for him, the sharp proceeds, "All right, give me a fiver and stand in with me." The fiver changes hands, and Teddy goes off to put the money on. He only goes off, however, for the money remains in his pocket.

Of course, "the cert." goes down, and Teddy comes back bemoaning the bad luck, which has attended his speculation. He has a very plausible explanation, however—a bad start or an unfortunate swerve at a critical moment—and adds that he is sure to get the money back, "and a bit besides," on the next race.

Telling the tale.

But the "good thing" never comes off, and the game goes on merrily for the two sharpers, until the unfortunate flat, playing the "getting-back" stakes, is quite cleaned out. The sharps, who he believes have lost with him, offer to come to his assistance. In exchange for his I.O.U.'s, they pretend to put money on horses for him, and at the end of the day the flat finds himself broke and owing his new-found friends a considerable sum of money.

The next act in the little drama takes place in town during the ensuing week. The flat receives a note from the swindlers, with a request for the money represented by the I.O.U.'s. Then the flat pays again, or, if he does not, he is visited by some of the "boys," who threaten to make it very hot for him if he does not at once redeem his paper.

Sometimes the flat happens to be a City clerk, and it is often the case that, in his desperate desire to settle, he helps himself to money that is not his own, thus taking his first step to the Old Bailey.

Osterfeld and Essor.

A Gang of Swindlers Inveigle Count Uregg into Marriage, and then Strangle Him.

"Come listen to the tale I tell;
I am just in the mood
To tell you how it all befel,
This murder in the wood."
—"The Song of Robin Air."

IN the early part of the nineteenth century there lived in a romantic and ancient castle, situated in one of the remoter districts of Hesse, the young Count Uregg and his widowed mother.

We are first introduced to the count as a boy of fifteen, wandering the glades and leafy solitudes of the neighbouring forests, climbing the mountains; in short, giving free vent to the dictates of a temperament profoundly romantic.

The young count had few friends, with the exception of his tutor and his mother, who was fast approaching the hour of mortal dissolution; and he was forced to seek companionship in books, so that although he cannot in truth be described as of a studious disposition, he was seldom seen on his solitary walks without some volume or other in his hands.

Young Uregg read little philosophy, had no yearning for metaphysics, and hated religious works of all sorts; indeed, the only books that he read with any avidity were those that tell of the romance of life, the beauties of nature, and the beautiful in all things.

His immature mind was fed on the wildest legends, nurtured on myths and phantasies, and steeped in poetry.

Not far from the ancient castle that he had inherited from his dead father, in a valley that lay between two mountains, and was encompassed all about by a thick and wide-stretching forest, stood a Benedictine monastery, inhabited by a score of monks, mostly old men, with whom young Uregg would pass many pleasant hours searching for fish in the little crystal streamlets that ran and babbled amongst the olive green foliage; or, sitting in the rose-grown monastery garden, talking of dreams and their fairy inhabitants.

Uregg's youth was spent in this solitary, but not unhappy, fashion, reading with his tutor, wandering in the beautiful valleys and silent woods of Hesse, varied with an occasional talk with the monks of the Benedictine monastery.

When the boy was eighteen, his mother died, leaving Uregg the master of an ancient and historic castle, rich beyond the dreams of avarice; a landlord of considerable estate, owning vast lands and an enormous retinue of servants, and an orphan without a single near relation in the world. The count, in spite of his scanty years, adopted the cares and responsibilities of his exalted station with an ease and grace that spoke eloquently of the noble blood that ran in his veins. He appointed his stewards, looked into his accounts, improved in certain matters the conditions of his tenantry, and in every way gave promise of being a credit and an ornament to his ancient name. There were few families in the district of quality or station that would permit of familiar intercourse, so that the young landlord was still cast very much on the resources of his mind and the companionship of a lively imagination.

The district was a quiet and remote one, in which the slightest digression from the universal monotony was welcomed by everybody as a momentout and memorable incident.

If the blacksmith's fire went out, or the miller's horse ran away, or Gretchen, the serving-maid, was seen kissing Hans the groom, the news was wafted at once from one village to another, and was everywhere accounted an event of importance.

If such trivial occurrences could rouse the interest and stir the curiosity of the inhabitants of Hesse, how much more must their imagination have been excited by the news that a family of strangers had bought an old manor house that had for years remained untenanted, and were about to settle in their midst.

The wildest excitement reigned on all sides for a considerable time. The name of the family was Essor; nothing was known of them, from where they had come, who they were, or why they had chosen so solitary and remote a district for their dwelling.

There were three in the family—the father, mother, and one young daughter—of whom more hereafter. The father—Conrad Essor—was a man of middle age, handsome, though prematurely old in appearance, and with an air of melancholy that lent a morose gloom to otherwise attractive and animated features.

He was very affable to his servants, and was generally thought to be a gentleman of studious pursuits, who had retired to Hesse in search of quietude and the tranquillity of a rural existence.

Count Uregg heard, with everybody else, of the advent of the stranger family, and, indeed, as he owned the old house which the Essors occupied, his steward had necessarily been involved in business negotiations with Conrad.

From his steward the young count learnt that his new tenant was a handsome man, somewhat reserved in demeanour, but evidently a person of some distinction.

The count thought little more about the matter, indeed he had almost forgotten the existence of the Essors, when one day, wandering as usual in the leafy confines of a neighbouring forest, he was surprised to see a female form dart out of a clump of trees before him, leap through the braken with the agile movement of a young stag, and run down a green declivity that led, or seemed to lead, out of the forest.

Uregg knew well that the path the unknown girl had taken would lead her to the edge of an unusually wide stream, and confident of meeting this female adventurer, he pushed on in the same direction. He reached the banks of the little river without seeing any more of the girl.

Where could she be?

He was sure that there was no possible egress from the spot where he now stood but by the path he had just pursued. Had he passed her on the way? Impossible; the road was narrow, and the young man's eyes were keen.

Mystified and perplexed, Uregg sat down on the bank of the stream and ruminated on the strange occurrence.

He had not remained thus for long when his quick ear heard something stirring a patch of tall, waving grass a little to his left.

The young count, who never went abroad unarmed, drew a pistol from his belt and presented it at the spot from whence the sound had just proceeded.

"Who goes there?" he cried, in a loud voice. "Declare yourself this instant, or I fire."

The only answer to his demand was a terrified feminine shriek. The count dropped the pistol. As he did so a face, the face of a beautiful girl, peered out from the midst of the waving grass, and regarded him with frightened eyes.

Surely it was the face of a wood nymph!

Those grey-green eyes, that small scarlet mouth, that pale, snow-white complexion, and those wonderful, loose, unknotted tresses of burnished gold, never could belong to mortal woman!

There was something weird and fairy-like about this small, strangely-beautiful face peering out of the tall green rushes. The count was in turn alarmed. Could he be in the presence of one of those fabulous creatures which superstition still said inhabited the forests?

All his doubts were speedily put to rest.

The tall grasses parted and a lithe, tall, young lady, wonderfully beautiful, but undeniably human, rose and stepped out before him. Her hair fell in disorder about her shoulders, her dress was covered with leaves and blades of grass, her whole appearance was wild and unconventional, but for all that the count was no longer in doubt that he was in the presence, not of a water nymph, but of an exceedingly lovely young lady.

"You are a fine gentleman, to threaten a girl with fire-arms!"

She spoke in a low, melodious voice, curiously like the cooing of a bird.

Count Uregg blushed.

"Indeed, I had no thought that so charming a personage was concealed in the grasses. In these forests one must be prepared for robbers. I offer you my humble apologies."

While the young man was speaking his eyes were riveted upon his companion's face. She noticed this, and a little pale rose-colour flushed up into her cheeks.

"I am Count Uregg," said our hero frankly. "May I ask whom I have the honour of addressing?"

The girl laughed, bit her lip, and looked away.

The count thought she had an indescribable grace of manner.

"My name is Amelia Essor," she said, flushing pink again all over her cheeks and lily-white neck.

"You are a fine gentleman!"

"Ah! Miss Essor, this is indeed a fortunate meeting!"

"Fortunate?"

"Yes, fortunate. I am indebted to the occurrence which has provoked our acquaintance."

"You say very pretty things, count."

By this time they were retracing their footsteps.

The count walked by Amelia's side, feeling perhaps happier than he had ever felt before in his life.

He walked with her as far as the door of her father's mansion, and was about to leave her here, when Conrad Essor came out and invited Uregg to step inside and drink a dish of tea with them.

The count hesitated and then accepted the invitation.

Amelia ran away to change her travel-stained dress, to shake the leaves from her hair, and to knot up the loose golden tresses in bronze ribbons.

Madame Essor, who presided over the tea-tray, struck Uregg as being a tired, anæmic woman, with a rather frightened manner. Conrad soon convinced his guest that he was a man of high intellectual powers, studious, and somewhat of a poet.

The young count reciprocated warmly the advances of Conrad, and felt delighted at the new and congenial friendship he had contracted. After some little time Amelia rejoined the party, transformed from a wild, elfish sprite of the woods into a tall, elegant young lady, high-bred and beautiful.

That night Uregg could not sleep for thinking of the lovely Amelia; he wandered out into the starlit night, under the wan rays of the weeping moon, down to the door of Essor's mansion. He looked up at the quiet windows, wondering which room contained Amelia's virgin slumbers, and, as with the stirring dawn he retraced his steps homeward, he said to himself again and yet again:

"I love her! I love her!"

He felt his being stirred to its very depths by the beauty of Amelia; he longed for her presence, her smile, her light laugh, and her charm of manner.

Never in all his life had he felt so about a girl. He had lived a life retired from feminine associations, and the advent of Amelia—an embodiment of all that was externally lovely in her sex—came to him as a revelation—a revelation of undreamt of joy, of unimagined sorrow.

He was at no pains to hide from the Essors the state of his affections.

He visited their mansion daily, plied Amelia with presents of every description, took her out long walks, and finally ended by one day throwing himself on to his knees, covering her little hands with kisses, and vowing his love in wild, disordered rhetoric.

Amelia blushed very charmingly, shed a few tears, and finally—having made Uregg rise from his knees—collapsed upon his bosom.

Uregg that evening hastened to apprise Conrad Essor that he loved Amelia, had asked her to be his wife, and had been accepted. Conrad was at first disposed to complain of Uregg's negligence in not acknowledging to him first his affection for Amelia, and seeking for her father's compliance in his design upon her hand before he broached the subject to the girl herself. The young count pleaded the impatience of love, and Conrad accepted this very reasonable explanation.

That night when Amelia was sleeping, and Uregg was dreaming of his beloved, Conrad Essor found it impossible to slumber. He left his mansion and wandered through the moonlit glades of the surrounding forest.

"Never," he cried, "has my heart failed me in the hour of success as it does at this moment.

"He is so young—so very young—and I like him, too; yet the game so well started must be played out to the bitter end. Poor boy!

"Would to God I could shake off the grasp of the fiend—the human devil that bestrides my soul!"

In such disjointed and apparently disconnected utterances did Conrad Essor disburden his heavy spirit to the silent trees and the unoffending flowers.

He seemed to be the victim of some intense, hidden sorrow. Tears stood in his eyes and the sweat of anguish ran from his furrowed brow

His musings were interrupted by the sudden sound of a horse galloping through the forest. The neighbourhood was known to be infested on certain occasions with lawless bands of bandits, and Conrad hastily looked to the primings of his pistols as the horse seemed to be galloping in his direction.

Conrad stood well in the shadow, but before him was a large open clearing, devoid of shrub or foliage, and very vivid in the clear moonlight.

The horse came careering towards him, a huge black steed, with blood-flecked foam clinging to his jaws, and wild, rolling eyes. His rider made an extraordinary figure. He seemed to be tall and somewhat slender, and was swathed in the gathered folds of a long, sombre-looking cloak.

When in the centre of the moonlit patch of open ground, he reined his steed hastily in for a moment, and glanced suspiciously around him.

"Whoa, my beauty!" he cried. "This way or that? I believe I've lost my path."

As he spoke, Conrad Essor staggered forward with an ejaculation of astonishment on his lips.

"'Tis he!" cried Essor.

The horseman, startled at the sound of a human voice in such an unexpected spot, and at such an unusual hour, had a pistol levelled at Conrad's head in the flash of a moment.

"What brings you here, Osterfeld?" cried Conrad.

The stranger lowered his weapon.

"Why, Conrad Essor—a friend instead of a foe—the very man I was about to call upon."

"At this hour of the night?"

"The most propitious of all hours for our purpose."

A look of pain shot through Conrad's features.

"Yes," he assented bitterly, "our deeds are deeds of the night. Things of darkness and dread."

The stranger laughed, a hollow laugh, and with an agile movement sprang from the saddle and stood by his companion's side.

He took off his hat, disclosing a head covered with black, glossy ringlets, and a high, smooth forehead. His nose

was straight, his cheeks somewhat sunken, his lips thin and sinister, and his eyes—the eyes of a fiend!

"This is a lucky meeting, Conrad," he said; "it will save me journeying to your house."

"Yes."

"How prospers our purpose?"

"Our purpose, as you call it, prospers peculiarly well."

"Has he bitten at the bait?"

"He proposed to-day."

"The gods are with us!"

"The marriage will take place shortly."

"I shall not appear on the scene," said the stranger, "until the marriage is solemnised, and the couple joined in conjugal happiness. How are funds?"

"Poorly. I have had to entertain him a lot, and live in a style that demands considerable expenditure.

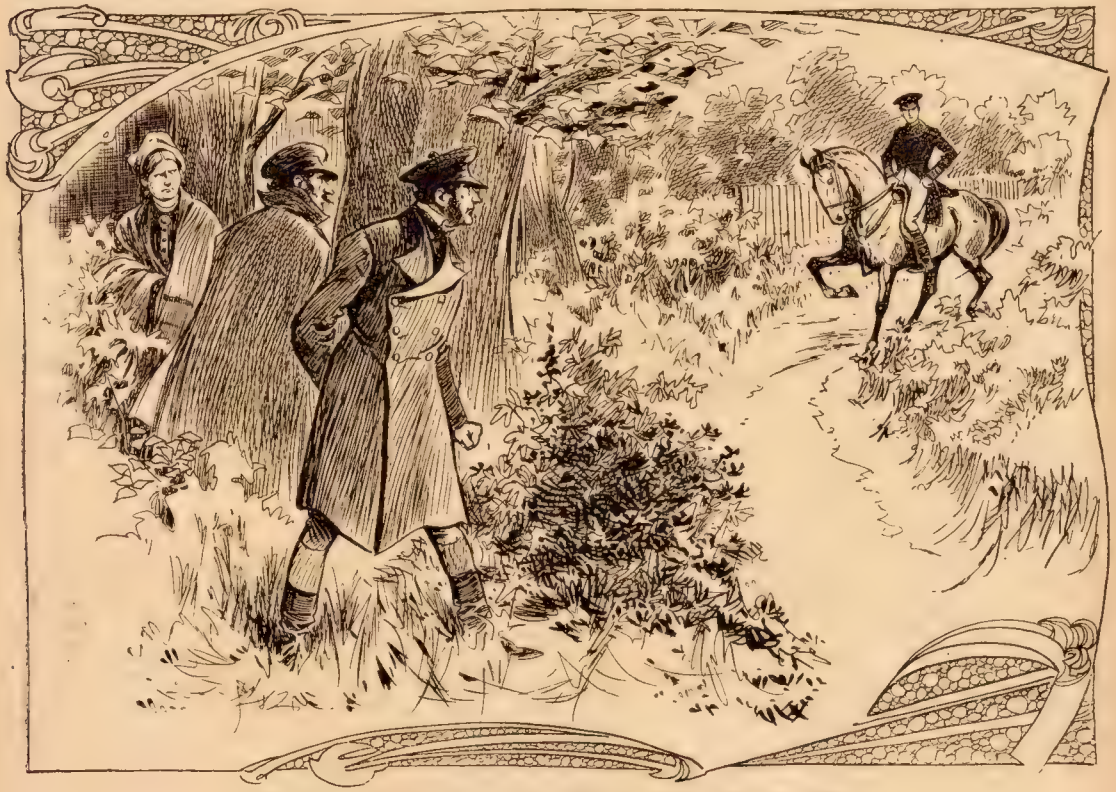
"Ah, well," said the stranger, "we shall soon now reap the reward of our labours. This will help you on," saying which he took from the interior of his cloak a heavy purse, which he dropped into Conrad's hand.

again, until she caught the infection, and losing much of her former restraint, answered in terms of kindred extravagance.

Conrad Essor—not the Conrad we saw at the midnight meeting in the wood clutching at gold and swearing himself to villainy, but the masked Conrad, the courteous, proud gentleman—took over the entire management of affairs. He took Count Uregg apart a few days before the marriage, and asked him what provision he intended making for Amelia in the case of his death.

"I have never thought of such a thing," replied the young man.

"The subject being, of course, a purely business one," said Conrad, "I confess I wish you had done so, for then I should not have been under the necessity of broaching the matter. As it is, although I feel the utmost repugnance at having to consider the possibility of a dear—a very dear—friend's possible demise, and also all financial affairs are peculiarly distasteful to me, yet I cannot shift from my conscience the responsibility and the duty of a father."



THEY SAW THE YOUNG COUNT RIDING SLOWLY TOWARDS THEM.

Conrad Essor was a man transformed. His face quivered, his eyes glowed, his hands trembled as he opened the purse and saw the gold pieces glittering in his clutch.

Gold was his secret, gold that had already made him a villain and was yet to make him a murderer!

"Thank you, Osterfeld—thanks," cried the man of greed, with all his former scruples forgotten. "All will be well. We'll choke him yet and nab the shiners."

"That's the style, my hearty," cried Osterfeld, leaping again into the saddle. "Enough for the present; you will see me anon. Adieu." He shook the reins, and his steed swerved round and galloped once more towards the darkness of the forest.

Osterfeld turned in his saddle as he disappeared from sight and gave to Conrad Essor a parting wave of the hand.

The wretched man did not see him. He was squatting on the ground, busily counting the exact contents of the purse.

In the course of the next few days the preparations for Amelia's approaching marriage with Count Uregg went on apace. The young lover never hardly left Amelia's side; he poured out to her the rhapsody of his affection again and

"I appreciate your sentiments," answered Uregg.

"I know you will understand my position. You are both so young, and so little acquainted with the greyer vicissitudes of life, and so unlikely to calculate on the mischances of precarious fortune, that it behoves me to speak to you earnestly, count, on the subject—to take the place in your councils, if I may say so, of your own father."

The end of this momentous conversation was that Count Uregg decided to at once make his will, leaving his fortune in its entirety at his death to Amelia, who then would be his wife.

Osterfeld, the horseman whom we met with Conrad in the forest, had taken to riding over every night to the appointed spot in the woodland where he had before encountered Essor, to learn from his confederate the progress of events.

On the night previous to the conversation between Conrad and Uregg, of which we have chronicled a part, Osterfeld had instructed Essor to postpone the marriage.

"He must not have the girl until that will is signed," he had cried. "If he marries her without the all-important document willing his fortune to her being signed we are undone. We give him Amelia and get nothing in return.

Dangle the girl before his eyes, and swear you will not allow her to marry him until the will is made, and we shall get just what we please."

Now, however, young Uregg had agreed to sign the required document, and there was no further obstacle to the marriage. Osterfeld was informed, and at once gave Essor authority to push matters on with all possible speed.

By this time, perhaps, the reader is inquiring who are these people—the mysterious Osterfeld, that commanded the Essor family, the Essors themselves, submissive to Osterfeld's will, but evidently engaged with him on some dark and fell design. Who were they?

Osterfeld and the Essors were a notorious gang of general criminals, thieves and swindlers, of which party of freebooters Osterfeld was the supreme chief.

He had Conrad Essor and his wife thoroughly under his control, and to them his slightest word was law.

When they had first joined forces Amelia was a child, but as soon as she grew up into the beautiful girl she now was Osterfeld determined to make her his mistress. He was about to do this when he bethought him of what a fine prey this lovely virgin might bring into their net, so he temporarily curbed his own desires, and set about finding for her a suitable victim. The victim was Count Uregg. In due course, the marriage took place, amidst general acclamations.

The count was entranced with his young bride, and passed with her a short time of paradisial bliss.

Then came the terrible climax to which all this secret plotting and planning had tended for so long.

Essor, once he got his daughter married, refused, or, rather shrank, from the final act of iniquity which was to put the count's wealth in his and Osterfeld's pocket—in a word, he shrank from murdering Count Uregg.

Osterfeld became impatient, took up his quarters in the near vicinity, was introduced to Uregg, and visited the Countess Amelia at every possible opportunity.

There was a wonderful fascination about the man. Amelia loved him. Her husband she regarded as a young fool, and the lawful prey of her father, mother and paramour. The visits of Osterfeld became so conspicuous that the villagers began to talk.

Still Uregg took no notice. One evening he returned to his castle and found Amelia and Osterfeld in each other's arms, reclining in an attitude that admitted of no possible explanation save an admittal of guilt.

He tore Osterfeld from the bed, and a terrible scene ensued between the two men.

Osterfeld was sorely tempted to kill him, but stayed his hand, remembering the gallows and the loss of a fine fortune.

The count told him that should he ever again be found in the precincts of the castle or in the company of his wife, his life should be forfeited.

Osterfeld slunk from his house like a beaten cur, repaired to the Essors', informed them of the circumstances of the discovery, and determined to slay Uregg at the earliest possible opportunity.

On Osterfeld's leaving the castle, Amelia flung herself weeping on her knees before her outraged husband, and prayed for his forgiveness.

The young man seemed thoroughly dazed and stunned by the terrible blow that had fallen upon him, crushing his dreams and ideals into the common earth.

He raised Amelia from her knees, but would not permit himself to any verbal pledge of forgiveness.

Shortly afterwards he summoned his horse and rode away.

As he left the house Amelia heard him mention the name of a certain town to a servant. In this town lived the attorney who kept Uregg's new-made will, and the count could have no other purpose in going there but to annul it.

Amelia, quick as lightning, fled to her father's, and informed the confederates. Uregg, to reach this town, would have to pass the Essors' mansion. He had not done so. Therefore, he had stopped on the way. The whole family, with the exception of Amelia, ran from the house and secreted themselves in a lonely part of the wood through which Uregg would have to pass. Osterfeld took a fine silken cord from his pocket and tied it in a slip-loop. Osterfeld was an expert strangler. The confederates heard the sound of a horse approaching.

In a moment more they saw the young count riding slowly towards them.

As he passed, Conrad and Osterfeld sprang up on either side of him and pulled him from his horse. The woman Essor thrust her handkerchief into his mouth. They next fixed the slip-cord on to the strong bough of a tree, and then, hoisting their victim up between them, they inserted his neck in the noose—and left him.

That evening two young English tourists found in the forest the body of a man hanging to a tree. His face was purple, and his eyes stood out of their blood-red sockets in hideous protrusion.

This was Count Uregg.

The German police were apprised of the fact, and they finally, rejecting the theory that the crime was committed by an ordinary band of robbers, arrested Osterfeld and the Essor family.

From a conversation in prison between Amelia and Osterfeld, the true facts of the case became known.

After a long and protracted trial, Osterfeld was sentenced to imprisonment for life, Julia Essor to four years' hard labour, and the Countess Amelia to three years' hard labour.

Conrad Essor died in gaol before the final day of the trial, else he would probably have perished on the gallows, as it was proved that his was the hand that actually pulled the cord round the unhappy young man's neck

Punishing Books.

THE fact that books speak with silent tongues, has rendered them objects suitable for punishment, ever since the discovery of writing. Times without number, we find in the archives of the world, records of books being publicly burnt because they were supposed to contain heresy, or to disseminate ideas which were subversive to law and order. The Church of Rome preserves a list of objectionable books, known as the "Index Expurgatorius," on which books deemed dangerous are placed, by way of punishment, and it is remarkable that the Index includes a work by the late Pope. To our cousins across the Atlantic, however, belongs the credit of having treated a book as if it were human, and whipped it! Here is a report of one such "execution," which took place at Milford, Connecticut, on Nov. 21st, 1755. "After perusing a false and scurrilous letter, printed at New York, signed Edward Cole, it was tho't proper that the same should be publicly whipt, as tending to beget ill-will. Accordingly it was here, at 4 of the clock this afternoon, after proper notice by beat of drum, publicly whipt, according to Moses's law, Forty stripes save One, by the common whipper, and then burnt." It must have been an imposing scene, for functions of that kind were attended by the military of the district, as well as by the various civil officials.

Peter I. Executioner.

IN olden times, when judges were often called upon to carry out the sentences which they themselves had imposed, and kings as often as not went on circuit as judges, there was many a royal executioner. Peter the Great, of Russia, however, brought the custom into force as late as the eighteenth century, for on several occasions he acted as executioner on the criminals whom he had ordered to be beheaded; the last occasion being after the siege of Narva, when he slew several soldiers for insubordination. He also took a pleasure in inflicting the knout and in flogging criminals, and is said to have been very skilful with the lash, killing his victims, or inflicting excruciating tortures at his pleasure. Those who defend the iron monarch, say that he only did the work of the executioner because he had a craze for testing all kinds of labour, but the frequency with which he placed himself in the position of flogger and headsman, rather belies this statement. Indeed, the callousness to suffering which was so deeply implanted in his character, is further shown by the fact that he took a delight in performing amputations, leaving the ordinary surgeons to tend the patient whom he had mutilated.

From Supper to Scaffold.

THERE has always been some sort of romance about a criminal's last meal on earth, and the public has been frequently anxious to learn what some celebrated culprit partook of before he was led to the scaffold. The popular idea, however, that a man about to be hanged can order whatever he likes for breakfast, is incorrect. To prepare for death, however, by a banquet is sufficiently strange for us to record here. During the Reign of Terror in France, the gaoler used to appear every evening in the common hall used by the Girondists, and read out the names of those who were to suffer on the following morning. These were treated by their fellows as the honoured guests of the evening, were made much of at supper, and after the meals speeches were recited in their honour, and on several occasions an impromptu drama was acted. That is what actually took place, though future historians have magnified the humble supper into a magnificent banquet, at which the greatest gaiety reigned. The nobles who conspired against Rienzi, "The Last of the Tribunes," in 1354, banqueted together on the eve of their execution, though they did not know that they were to die until the meal was concluded. Rienzi invited them all to dinner, and after the meal was over told them that he had discovered their conspiracy, and that they were all to die at daylight. They were taken from the banqueting hall to the block.

THE CRUELTY OF..... Dr. Cross

A TALE OF A DISTINGUISHED ARMY SURGEON WHO STOOPED TO WIFE-MURDER.

"Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Sonnets."

PART II.

WE left the servants of the Shandy Hall establishment in dismay at the death of their poor mistress, and horrified at the apparent callousness of their master, who simply ordered them to prepare her tortured body for burial. He went downstairs on that morning of June 2, 1887, and, after a short rest, set out to find an undertaker as quickly as he could. This he had no trouble in doing, for, as may well be imagined, in the little village of Dripsley deaths were not too common, and the local Mr. Omer was not over pressed with business.

To the astonishment of the neighbouring gentry, none less than to that of the servants, the funeral was of the very cheapest description, and was ordered to take place on the morning of June 4, at six o'clock. Then poor Mrs. Cross was laid to rest. As a reason for this most unseemly haste, Dr. Cross said that his wife had died of typhoid fever, and that it was unsafe, in the interests of the neighbourhood, for him to keep her above ground longer than was absolutely necessary. As a matter of fact, he signed the customary death certificate himself, stating that Laura Cross had succumbed to a severe attack of typhoid.

While Mrs. Cross was ill Philip was still in frequent communication with his friend Effie Skinner, and as soon as the necessary formalities connected with his wife's death had been concluded, Dr. Cross saw no reason why he should not go and see his little friend and be consoled for the loss of his jealous spouse. Accordingly we find that on June 9 he went to Dublin again and met Miss Skinner, taking her to the same hotel which had previously been used by the couple. There they stopped for a couple of days as man and wife, but this time they were not living under false pretences, as the following entries found in the doctor's notebook will testify: "June 9.—Started for London. June 17.—Married to E. F. Skinner, at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, London."

Again, on June 24, the newly-married couple occupied their Dublin quarters, but on this occasion their habitual caution forsook them, and they entered their names in the register as "Mr. and Mrs. Onslow." After this brief honeymoon Cross returned to his home at Shandy Hall.

At first he did not take his new wife to her proper home, and denied the rumour which said that he had already replaced Laura Cross, but when he found that the neighbours had written proof that he had married again he saw that there was nothing to be gained by denying it, and the fresh Mrs. Cross occupied the place of her predecessor.

In country places rumour gets round very quickly, and tongues are just as busy, if not more so, in the provinces of Ireland as they are in every market town and hamlet in this country. Therefore, it is not surprising that all the old cronies of the place discussed Dr. Cross's conduct from morn till night, and at last came to the conclusion that it was very suspicious that he should marry only a few days after his first wife's death.

One after another remembered how they had been told that Mrs. Cross was too unwell to be seen, and how only the doctor himself had administered medicine to his suffering spouse. Then reports as to the cause of death flew round, and at last the inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary for that district was compelled to take the matter up and have it properly investigated.

This he did by drawing up a lengthy report, which he forwarded to the district coroner for his information. In it he detailed the principal facts which we have already given, and said that Dr. Cross had made contradictory statements concerning the cause of his wife's demise, telling some that she had succumbed to typhoid fever, while to others he attributed death to angina pectoris and to heart disease. Moreover, it was common property in the village that Mrs. Cross was very jealous of Miss Skinner, and had virtually demanded her dismissal from the house. He concluded by saying that the whole district was greatly disturbed about the whole affair, and prayed that the coroner would take the necessary steps for a precept for exhumation to be issued and an inquest held to allay popular dissatisfaction.

The coroner read this document and went down to Shandy himself to hear what was being said. He soon found that the general impression was that the doctor had murdered his wife in order to be able to marry his mistress. At the same time no little sympathy was expressed for beautiful Mrs. Cross II.

This being so, the coroner wrote to the authorities and obtained an order for the exhumation of the woman's body, ordering one of the Cork experts, Professor Pearson, to analyse the remains and report thereon in due course.

On July 21 the body of the late Mrs. Cross was exhumed, and the experts took away what portions they thought fit for analysis. An inquest was also opened by Mr. Coroner Horgan, at which both the Crown and the police were represented. Dr. Cross was present himself.

The document of Inspector Tyacke, which was mainly instrumental in setting the inquiry in motion, was read by the coroner, and then Mrs. Caulfield was placed in the witness-box. She told the jurors how she had called on Mrs. Cross, and how on the first occasion she had been allowed to see the patient for a few moments, but that on subsequent occasions she had been told that Mrs. Cross was resting and could not see any visitors. The deceased had told her that she was suffering violently from pains in the abdomen and was continually vomiting. The witness was much surprised to learn that the poor woman had died shortly afterwards.

Mary Buckley, the servant-maid, was examined, and she swore to hearing terrible screams in the middle of the night of June 1, and said that she was woke up later by her master, who told her that the mistress was dead. Dr. Cross, according to this witness, did not care in the least about the death, and went downstairs quite unconcernedly to see after his personal affairs.

That evidence was sufficient for the coroner to order a remand till July 29, to enable the medical experts to examine the viscera which had been removed from the body.

As soon as this preliminary sitting was completed, Dr. Cross drove back to Shandy, to superintend the carting of some hay, which had been cut in one of his paddocks. He had not the least thought for his wife's remains, which were taken back to the churchyard on a donkey cart. But suspicion was fastening on him in the strange way in which it always does. The murderer may hide every trace of his crime, or believe that he has done so, but a time will come when that crime will rise up and confront him. Thus Dr. Cross never worried his head about the turn affairs were taking, and contented himself with assuring his new wife that the whole agitation was nonsense, and that she might well dismiss it from her mind.

His security, however, was short-lived, for on the day preceding the adjourned inquest he was arrested on suspicion of causing the death of Laura Cross and lodged in gaol. Under these circumstances he did not see fit to be present at the inquiry on July 29, but was represented instead by Mr. Robert Deyos, a solicitor, who, later, fought nobly for his client.

At this inquest some account was given of the deceased lady. She was said to be 49 years of age, and had been the mother of six children, the eldest of whom was only 16 years of age. She was English by birth and had been married to Dr. Cross for 18 years. Dr. Cross was a retired surgeon-major, and had a little private income, as well as the pension which he derived from the Government.

The jury having been told the status of the deceased and the accused man, the medical expert was next called.

Dr. Pearson said that he had examined the viscera of the lady into whose death they were then inquiring. When he made the preliminary post-mortem examination he found no symptoms whatsoever consistent with death from typhoid fever, but, on the other hand, he saw abundant proof of irritant poisoning. The symptoms during life, as described, might possibly be consistent with one of the stages of typhoid fever, but the effects of that disease, when seen after death, would be widely different.

Being led to believe that the inflammation which he found in the principal organs, and notably in the walls of the stomach, were the direct result of the administration of an irritant, he had analysed portions of the intestines and stomach, as well as selected quantities of the contents, which were scanty, and had found a considerable quantity of arsenic and a small amount of strychnine. Both, however, were undoubtedly present in fatal doses. He had not the least hesitation in saying that death was the result of poisoning by arsenic. Apparently the strychnine had not acted, or had been administered so soon before death that it did not operate on the living tissue.

More than that, from the experience which he had had in poisoning cases, he was of the opinion that the arsenic had been administered over some little period, and not in one or two doses. This conclusion he was led to by the highly inflamed state of the stomach, which pointed to prolonged irritation, as well as by the manner in which the drug was diffused throughout the body. He would again repeat to the jury that he had not the slightest hesitation in declaring that death was due to arsenic poisoning.

Before giving their verdict, the coroner's jury asked about Miss Skinner—then Mrs. Cross the second—and were convinced that that lady could not have had any knowledge whatsoever about the cause of her predecessor's death; in fact, sympathy was felt for the girl who had been betrayed, while ignorant of the wrong she was doing. They then returned the following verdict, which differs somewhat from the form used in England:

"Our verdict is that Mary Laura Cross died at Shandy Hall, County Cork, between the morning of the 1st and the morning of the 2nd of June, 1887, and that death was caused by the effects of poison. And so say we all."

That being so, there was nothing to be done but to arraign Dr. Cross before the resident magistrate on the charge of murder. On August 1st he was taken into the magistrate's court and formally charged before Mr. J. C. Gardiner, resident magistrate. Here we may point out that the principal districts in Ireland have paid magistrates, whose positions are similar to those who sit in our London courts, thus obviating the necessity for a large number of Justices of the Peace, and ensuring justice being meted out with an impartial hand. The system has been found to work so well in practice that it has been introduced into India and other of our colonies, where it is most successful.

Before this functionary, then, the ex-army surgeon was brought, and witnesses placed in the box to depose against him in the courthouse at Coachford. Naturally, the most important of all the array was Professor Pearson, who stated that he again confirmed the analyses which he had made, prior to the inquest, and he was more than ever convinced that death was due to poisoning. He had also shown his tests to a colleague, Dr. Cowley, who perfectly agreed with him, and was able the better to do so, inasmuch as he had been present at the post-mortem examination. Strychnine was present in a small quantity, arsenic in a large one. Strychnine was much more potent than arsenic, but he was inclined to think that death was due to the commoner poison.

In this evidence Dr. Cowley concurred, stating that there could be no reasonable doubt that death ensued from a dose of arsenic. There were really no symptoms of typhoid fever in the body at all. He was registrar for the district, and Dr. Cross had entered the death as the result of typhoid. Mrs. Caulfield and the servants told the magistrate of the symptoms of the poor woman as far as they saw them, and the lady said that she was very anxious to see her friend, but was told that she was not sufficiently well to see anybody. Furthermore, it was said that no one was permitted to give

DR. CROSS AND MISS SKINNER AT THE HOTEL.

any medicine to the sufferer, save her husband, who kept the drugs in his own surgery.

Dr. Godfrey said that he had called on one occasion, but had not been asked to come again. When he saw the deceased he was of opinion that she was suffering from a rather severe attack of biliousness, but Cross had remarked that it might turn into typhoid. The treatment which Dr. Cross had told him was being pursued was perfectly correct for the condition. He did not actually know that the doctor was giving his wife the drugs which he said he was, but trusted him as a relative and a brother doctor. There was no mention of arsenic in the prescriptions.

He was followed by Nurse Jefferson, who said that no one was with Mrs. Cross at night but her husband. He insisted on administering all medicines.

Then came a damning witness for the prosecution. Sergeant Higgins, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, swore that he had overheard a conversation between Dr. Cross and his sister, who was stopping in the house. The accused asked the lady if she had destroyed a "couple of little bottles about the size of my finger," and to this the lady replied that she had done so "with the other things." The case was continually adjourned, because it took a long time to elicit any sound information from the witnesses, so that the above evidence was spread over several sittings of the court. But on September the 5th, after Professor Pearson had been re-examined, and had upheld his statements on the two previous occasions, Dr. Philip Eustace Cross was formally committed to take his trial at the next Winter Assizes at Cork.

As can be well imagined, the case had created a good deal of excitement in the south of Ireland, and the advisers of the prisoner thought that any jury in the country would be prejudiced against their client, so they made an application in the High Court of Dublin for the venue of the trial to be changed from Cork to the Irish capital. The main grounds were that Cross was boycotted, and was excluded from the local hunt, and that, therefore, every juror would come into court with a determination that the doctor was guilty. This application was argued for nearly a whole day before three Irish judges in the Court of Queen's Bench. The Solicitor-General for Ireland opposed the moving of the trial, and Mr. Atkinson, then a well-known barrister, led for the prisoner. After a long technical wrangle, the judges decided that nothing would be gained by altering the scene of the trial, and it was ordered to take place in the ordinary course at the Munster Assizes at Cork.

On the 7th of December, Mr. Justice Murphy arrived in the southern port to open the "Assizes of Oyez and Terminer, and to effect a General Gaol Delivery," as the quaint phraseology puts it.

In charging the Grand Jury, he pointed out that the case of Dr. Philip Cross was too serious to be disposed of before all the evidence had been heard, and directed the Grand Jury to return a true bill, unless they saw any very definite reason for not doing so. They could not find any peculiar circumstances which would justify them from returning the proper bill, so it was declared that Dr. Cross was to stand his trial in the ordinary course.

It was not till the 14th of December that he was brought to the bar to plead to his indictment, which charged him with the foul murder of his wife. As might be expected, he pleaded that he was not guilty, and a jury was empanelled to try the case.

For the Crown, the Attorney-General for Ireland led, accompanied by Mr. Wright, Q.C., and Mr. Ronan, while Dr. Cross was defended by Mr. Atkinson, Q.C., and Mr. Adams, instructed by his firm supporter, Mr. Deyos.

The trial lasted four days, but as much of that time was occupied in repeating the facts which our readers are now in possession of, we will only add any new matter which transpired.

Mr. Poole, the manager of the North Western Hotel at North Wall, Dublin, swore positively that the prisoner and Miss Skinner had stopped on the occasions mentioned at his house, and his evidence was corroborated by the chambermaid in charge of the floor on which they lodged. Neither of these witnesses was likely to forget the visit, inasmuch as Dr. Cross had his luggage marked in a peculiar fashion, which drew everybody's attention to it. It was marked with a capital P, followed by a white cross (X), and the servants were curious as to the meaning of this strange method of marking baggage.

The prisoner's diary was also produced, and in it were found references to the illness of his late wife, describing her symptoms from day to day, and also the following significant entries which were made after she had breathed her last, and which show the esteem in which Dr. Cross held her:

"Mary Laura Cross departed this life 2nd. May she go to heaven is my prayer. Buried on 4th."

"6th.—For Laura Cross's funeral, etc., five guineas."

"7th.—R. H. Hall, five tons of maize, £23 10s."

These are followed by the entries recording his journey to London and his subsequent marriage there.

A chemist named James Kiloh proved that Dr. Cross bought a pound of white arsenic from him on the 3rd of September, 1886, and he signed the poison book for it, accidentally putting the wrong date for it. The purpose for which he wanted the drug was for making a sheep dip, and this he wrote down in the book and signed it, adding that he was a surgeon, and therefore entitled to purchase poisons without an introducer.

Owing to the regulations which affect evidence, it was impossible to call Miss Skinner (who was now the wife of the accused) to give her version of their movements, so one cannot comment on them; but in view of her future action it seems clear that she had no sympathy with the husband who had managed to ruin her life for her.

The defence rested solely on the weakness of all circumstantial evidence; on the fact that no one could prove that Dr. Cross had administered poison to his wife, and that there was absolutely no motive shown. Mr. Atkinson made great capital, also, out of the fact that it was highly improbable that any medical man would make use of a poison so easily recognised to effect his nefarious purpose. Moreover it could not be said that the purchase of arsenic as far back as the September previous could be construed into a determination to commit a murder in the following June. It had been shown that the prisoner did have occasion to make use of arsenic for sheep dip, and it could not be proved that he had given any of this to his wife.

The servants were curious.

In reply to this the Attorney-General wanted to know why the doctor had been so very anxious to have the "two little bottles" destroyed. He also pointed out to the jury that it was quite possible that a little of the pound of arsenic might have been left over after the sheep dip had been made. Further, a doctor was in a position to obtain arsenic when he wanted it. The whole of the symptoms of poisoning led one to conclude that the work was that of a trained man, who knew exactly how to administer the poison with the best effect. "If you want motive," he thundered, "what greater motive could there be than his desire to rid himself of the wife whom he hated, who was an obstacle to him, so that he might gratify his lusts with the young woman whom he had seduced?" Again, the jury were to regard the indecent haste with which the body had been buried, and the extraordinary hour at which the interment had taken place. That did not look like the work of a doctor who had lost his wife from typhoid fever. If he was so sure that typhoid fever was

the malady from which she was suffering, common humanity demanded that he should have advice from another medical man. Instead of which, the prisoner calls in Dr. Godfrey for one visit, never lets him have a chance to examine the patient, and then does not admit him again. He would not dwell on the fact that it was contrary to all recognised codes of medical etiquette for a doctor to sign a death certificate for members of his own family, for that would be patent to everybody. In the end he asked them to convict the prisoner.

Mr. Justice Murphy summed up very carefully, for a reason which will be apparent shortly. He reviewed the whole of the evidence, dwelling equally pointedly on the facts which told for the prisoner and the Crown. He instructed the jury as to the law of murder, and showed them that if they believed that the accused had given arsenic to his wife with intent to shorten her life, they should convict, but that if they disbelieved the medical evidence, etc., etc.

The jury retired for nearly an hour, and, after once sending in a query to the judge, they returned to the court with their verdict. This was "GUILTY!"

Dr. Cross heard the customary questions without turning a hair, but when he was asked if he had anything to say why judgment should not be given to him to die according to law, he inquired of the judge if he might speak.

"Certainly. Now is the time," replied Justice Murphy.

The convict then commenced a long and rambling statement, in which he said that he was the last man to attempt to poison anybody. He had once poisoned a dog, and swore never to do so again, but that even if he did, was it probable that any medical man would make use of such a poison as arsenic? His wife might have died accidentally. She had been in the habit of using arsenic for her complexion, and had often spoken to Miss Skinner about washes made out of that deadly drug. He did not know whether she had obtained any arsenic, but if it was certain that she died from the effects of that poison, she must have done so. Other people also might have poisoned her. She was very fond of macaroni, blanc manges, and other white puddings, and it would be very easy to administer arsenic in those vehicles. With regard to his conduct after the death, he was too stricken with grief to talk, and believing that it was the best thing to be done, he had had his wife buried as soon as possible. He married again because he was very lonely.

After speaking in a most disconnected manner for nearly half an hour, he was placed at the front of the dock to receive sentence.

Mr. Justice Murphy told him that he had not the least doubt that the jury had rightly convicted him of one of the most cruel and cold-blooded murders of the century. He had watched the dying struggles of his wife, who had been true and faithful to him. He had administered the fatal drug in small doses, giving her acute agony, and he had watched that agony without making the slightest sign to alleviate it, though from his training he could have done so. The motive for all the callous brutality was obvious: he wished to marry again. There was absolutely nothing to be said in his favour, but there was much to be said against him. It was a dreadful thing to see a man of his education and attainments standing convicted of such a heinous crime. He had served his country with credit, and now he had transgressed the very highest of all laws, the very one which men of his profession were trusted to prevent. All that remained for him was to pass upon him the last sentence of the law, and the only one which was permissible to pass on persons convicted of murder. In the usual terms Mr. Justice Murphy then pronounced the words which consigned the living man before him to an ignominious death. Cross heard his doom without a movement, and was taken below to the cells after exchanging a few words of thanks with Mr. Deyos, who had so nobly defended him.

Before the jury were discharged, they said that they would like to congratulate Mr. Justice Murphy on his attainment to the Bench, for that was the first time he had been sitting in an assize court. The judge thanked them, remarking how sad it was for him to have to condemn a man to death at his first sitting, and excused them from duty for seven years.

Poisoning is perhaps regarded with even greater horror in Ireland than it is in England, and only a few voices were raised to save Cross from the gallows. To these the Lord Lieutenant turned a deaf ear, and said that the law must take its course.

On Monday, the 9th of January, 1888, Cross had interviews with several of his relatives, but Effie, whose life he had ruined, refused to see him. He retired early, and rose at six on the following morning. After prayers with Mr. Connolly, the chaplain, he was taken from his cell and led out for execution. The scaffold was about forty yards from the condemned cell, and half-way along this distance Berry met the culprit with his straps. There he pinioned him, and the procession, under the direction of Under Sheriff Hale and the deputy-governor, proceeded to the gallows. It was remarked that the convict's hair had turned snow white since his conviction.

Berry immediately placed the convict under the beam, and in a few seconds nothing but inanimate clay dangled from the gibbet. Death was instantaneous. Then, and not till then, were the representatives of the Press admitted, the deputy-governor managing to insult them as well as to refuse them information; but what the subordinate refused, the sheriff granted.

At the inquest which followed, the most severe strictures were passed on the conduct of the deputy-governor for his interference with what was then considered to be the public rights. He furthermore got into trouble for permitting Berry, the hangman, to leave the prison before the inquest, or not to be present at the inquest, for it was confidently asserted by the responsible journals of the district (and notably by the premier South Irish paper, the "Cork Examiner") that a telegram was accepted for delivery to the executioner about five minutes after the inquest had been opened.

Owing to the wrangling concerning the conduct of the deputy-governor, it was some time before the hangman was called to give evidence, and when he was summoned, he had departed. The inquest was adjourned, but Berry did not turn up, and when, at the third sitting, the coroner produced a telegram from the common hangman saying that he was not yet in prison, and would attend if his expenses were provided, Mr. Horgan saw fit to adjourn the inquiry *sine die*. Up to that moment the body of the criminal had not been buried, but then it was interred by the request of the prison doctor. Still, to this day no legal reason has been given for the death of Dr. Philip Cross, and legally he has not been consigned to the ground.

Thus terminated the career of one who had great knowledge, but who was perverted by passion from the beaten track of integrity which he had followed for sixty-three years. While detesting the crime, one cannot but feel sorry for the downfall of a clever man, and drop a tear for the young wife and her step-children, whose lives were hopelessly ruined.

A Doubtful Question.

THE great American lawyer, Mr. Jeremiah Mason, was engaged in a case when the judge asked a witness a question which was of doubtful admissibility, whereupon Mason at once arose and said: "If your honour put that question for us, we don't want it; if you put it for the other side, then I object that it is not evidence."

The Wrong Man.

A MAN condemned for murder was being prepared for the scaffold. The executioner was in the act of pinioning his arms, when the supposed criminal was seen to be almost bursting with suppressed laughter. The governor of the gaol sternly requested him to show a little decorum at that solemn moment. "I can't help laughing," said the prisoner. "He! he! he! They're—they're hanging the wrong man!"

He Wanted Order.

JUSTICE MAULE was once much perplexed by the confused way in which the counsel opened a case which the judge was trying.

At last the latter interrupted the barrister with: "I wish you would put your facts in some kind of order. Chronological order is one way, and perhaps the best, but I am not particular; any order you like—alphabetical order if you prefer it."

There Was Nothing in It.

AN Irish judge once shook his head as Mr. Curran was explaining one of his points to a jury. "I see," said Curran, "I see, gentlemen, the motion of his lordship's head; common observers might imagine that it implied a difference of opinion, but they would be mistaken. It is merely accidental. Believe me, gentlemen, if you remain here many days, you will yourselves perceive that when his lordship shakes his head, there's nothing in it!"

The Assassination of Peter III. of Russia.

How a weak Emperor was Foully Slain by his Nobles at the Instigation of the Empress.

"Weak, weak as water, and unstable. He
Who sits upon a throne must have a head
And hand so firm that he can guide with free
Loose rein the factions, leading them, not led
By every whim that sways the multitude;
So must he rule who rules his realm for good."
—ABERCROMBIE.

WHEN Charles Peter Ulric, son of the Duke of Holstein Gottorp, was selected by the Empress Elizabeth of Russia as her successor, he had, of necessity, to become a member of the Greek Church. In that faith, therefore, he was baptised at the age of fourteen, taking the name of Peter Feodorovitch. Before he was sixteen his clever aunt, Elizabeth, found him a wife in the person of Sophia Augusta Frederica, daughter of Christian Augustus, Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg. This princess, on entering the Greek Church, took the name of Catherine, and became the notorious Empress, the second of that name.

The grand duke ascended the throne by the title of Peter III., upon the death of his Aunt Elizabeth, whose decease was hastened by intemperance. He entered upon the government possessed of an enthusiastic admiration of the virtues of the King of Prussia, with whom he immediately made peace. He is said to have aimed at reforms which Peter the Great durst not attempt; and to have even ventured to cut off the beards of his clergy. He was certainly a weak man who had no opinions of his own, but childishly adopted the sentiments of any person who took the trouble to teach him. His chief amusement was buffoonery, and he would sit for hours looking at a merry-andrew singing drunken and vulgar songs. He was a stranger to the country, its inhabitants, and their manners, and suffered himself to be persuaded by those about him that the Russians were fools, and beasts unworthy of his attention, except to make themselves, by dint of Prussian discipline, good fighting-machines.

Becoming attached to a lady of the noble family of Woronzow, he disgusted his wife, who was then a beautiful woman in the prime of life, of great natural talents and great acquired accomplishments, whilst the lady he preferred to her was but one degree above an idiot. The Princess Dashkow, who has written her memoirs, edited by Mrs. Bradford, and published in the year 1840, was lady of honour, and lady of the bedchamber to the Empress, and had great influence over Catherine. The two, observing the growing dislike of his subjects for the Emperor, set themselves steadily to undermine the Czar's authority. Catherine conceived and eventually compiled her famous code of laws for a great empire, while the other, also a Catherine, reported faithfully upon the effect it had on the middle-class of the country. The thinking people—those above the position of serfs—soon began to speak familiarly of the blessings they might enjoy were the speculations embodied in the code but realised.

Meanwhile, Peter III. was giving fresh cause for discontent. He recalled from Siberia Count Munich, who was, in truth, a sensible, brave, and worthy man; but Munich, as he was smarting under the effects of Russian despotism, and had grounds of resentment against most of the great families, did little to discourage the Emperor's conduct, trying only to moderate it, and give it a system.

Peter, however, was impatient.

He publicly ridiculed the exercise of Russian troops, and hastily adopting Prussian discipline, without thoroughly making it compatible with the ideas of his own forces, successfully disgusted the whole of the army.

In the midst of these imprudences, indeed, Peter was sometimes disturbed by the advice of virtuous counsellors. But these remonstrances produced only a transitory gleam of reformation, and he soon relapsed into his accustomed sensuality and imbecility.

What he lost in popularity was gained by Catherine.

Four regiments of guards, amounting to eight thousand men, were quickly brought over by the three brothers Orloff, one of whom, Gregory, was the Empress's favourite, carrying on an almost open liaison with her. The people at large were in a state of indifference, but were soon roused by a little manuscript which was handed about, containing principles of legislation for Russia, founded on natural rights, and on the claims of the different classes. It passed for the work of her Majesty, and was much admired.

While Catherine was thus high in the public esteem and affection, the Emperor took alarm at her popularity, and in a few days came to the resolution of confining her for life, and then of marrying his favourite. The servants of that lady betrayed her to her sister (the Princess Dashkow), who imparted the intelligence to the Empress. Catherine saw her danger, and instantly formed her resolution. She must either tamely submit to perpetual imprisonment, and perhaps a cruel and ignominious death, or contrive to hurl her husband from the throne. No other alternative was left her, and the consequence was what was undoubtedly expected. The proper steps were taken. Folly fell before ability and address, and in three days the revolution was complete.

The indolent and pusillanimous Czar, who had paid little heed to what was transpiring around him, now sought to put himself at the head of the fleet, and made an attempt to reach Cronstadt from Oranienburg, on the Gulf of Finland, a distance of twenty-six miles. But he was too late. The far-seeing Catherine had already measured the capacity of the pockets of the naval commanders, and had filled them with French gold, procured for her through Lestocq, her wily physician.

When Peter approached the great fortress, under which the fleet lay, protected by the guns, the outlying sentries presented their muskets. Not one of the weapons was loaded, but the Emperor drew back in affright. Whereupon Count Munich exhorted him to return, assuring him in the most devoted terms of his unswerving fidelity, and offering to live or die with his sovereign.

The Czar stood gazing upon the scene before him with a white, scared face.

"No, Munich," he said, with unaccountable fatuity. "If I advance it will only be to shed the blood of my faithful Holsteiners, and that I shall never do."

The Holstein Guard was the most obnoxious legion in the whole Russian service. Every man in it was a foreigner imported from the Czar's own native country, and, being favoured beyond measure, the members of the corps assumed an arrogance and an attitude of superiority which caused them to be most cordially hated by all the native troops. Yet these were the men whose blood the Emperor had such exceeding care for that he was unable to make a single stroke to save his throne, or, although he did not know it then, his life itself.

Meanwhile the Empress had been pursuing in a quiet way the policy which her cunning maid-of-honour, the Princess Dashkow, was abetting her in. With a strong guard, and accompanied by a few favourites, she made her way to Peterhof. There she was met by her worthless husband. On his knees before her he consented to abdicate, and resign all his rights to the crown into her hands. Catherine laughed in her sleeve and played her own game. She cared nothing for the fool who was her husband. She had Gregory Orloff to fill his place and share her bed, but she must make some little acknowledgment to the convenances. She pretended to think over the matter; and in the meanwhile Peter was to be allowed to retire to his own estate of

Ropscha, within a measurable distance of St. Petersburg, where he had resided while his Aunt Elizabeth was alive.

This arrangement suited the lazy and easy-going Emperor in every way. He looked forward to a life of ease and pleasure with his semi-idiotic paramour, who was the sister of Catherine's astute adviser, the Princess Dashkow, undisturbed by the cares of state, and unharassed by an overbearing wife. He had abdicated, in an informal manner it was true, but if the Empress wished he was quite ready to make his abdication a public ceremony. When it was all over he believed he would be sent into Germany, whither, of course, his aristocratic leman would accompany him, and then he would be only too glad to shake the dust of Russia from his feet for ever.

The very day upon which he arrived at Ropscha he sent a message to Catherine, requesting her to dispatch to his retreat a favourite negro, with a dog to which he was much attached, his violin, his Bible, some romances, a goodly supply of Burgundy, choice food, and a large quantity of the best tobacco and pipes.

This order, given in the midst of all that was transpiring during that period (1742), enables us to have a strange glimpse of Peter's character. He had no dignity such as ought to befit the ruler of a mighty realm; his tastes were luxurious, but his habits were vulgar and repulsive; he could amuse himself with romances of a certain kind; but he loved a debauch with his mistress more; and though he had a gift for music, it was never cultivated. He was deficient in personal cleanliness, and in all the attributes of a gentleman, preferring low associates, mountebanks, and dogs to the refined allurements of a court.

Despite his natural bent, he wrote to his Empress that he was disgusted with the world and mankind, and intended henceforth to lead a philosophic life. What his philosophy was, one cannot easily suppose.

When he had been safely disposed of under a strong guard at Ropscha, Catherine returned to St. Petersburg, showering gifts and orders upon her supporters with a free hand. The smallest of her bounties amounted to 12,000 roubles, with an accompanying reward of 6,000 serfs, or 24,000 roubles without serfs, while the ribbon and jewel of St. Catherine were presented to the Orloffs and the Princess Dashkow.

After the bloodless revolution had become an accomplished fact, the soldiery stood aghast at the part they had taken in bringing about the turn of affairs. They had undoubtedly been freely bribed, but a revulsion of feeling took place amongst many of them, especially among the picked guards, and they would very likely have revolted but for the attitude of their officers, and the more respectable of the populace, who hailed the Empress as their saviour from a despicable and intolerable rule.

On the sixth day after Peter had been immured in his country house of Ropscha, which was, in fact, nothing more nor less than a prison, Alexis Orloff, one of the three brothers, set out for that castle. He was accompanied by an officer named Teploff, and entering the place, passed the soldiers, who thronged the entrance hall, and made his way to the presence of the Czar. Peter received him with all confidence, believing he had brought him the supplies he had asked for, and Orloff smilingly announced the Emperor's speedy deliverance.

POURED A POISONOUS MIXTURE INTO THE GLASS.

Peter was overjoyed at the prospect of leaving the empire, and returning to his home in the little duchy of Holstein, his departure from which he had never ceased to regret. As was the custom of the country and times, brandy was called for, and brought to them with three glasses. According to instructions, Teploff engaged the Czar in an animated conversation, and when his attention was diverted, Orloff poured a poisonous mixture into the glass from which he would drink. Then the two murderers, raising their own glasses in their hands, drank to the prolonged health and happiness of the Czar. Peter, bowing carelessly, being glad of an excuse to indulge in a drop of good liquor, tossed off the contents of the glass he held. The moment he swallowed the poisonous

stuff a peculiar change came over him. For a few seconds he did not seem to recognise what had happened. He stood with the empty glass in his hand, glaring into the eyes of the poisoners.

"There is something wrong," he said at last; "that was not brandy."

"I beg your pardon," responded Orloff, "it is the best your highness has in your cellar. Is it not, Teploff?"

"The very best," replied the officer laconically.

"See!" exclaimed Orloff, "we have both finished the same as your Majesty. The spirit is most excellent."

Pains now began to gripe the Emperor, and dashing down the glass, he took a step forward, his eyes rolling, and his full-lipped mouth working in a horrible manner.

"Villains!" he cried, "you have poisoned me!"

Orloff laughed.

"Nay, sire," he returned. "It is merely that the liquor has not agreed with you. You have not drunk enough. Permit me to refill your glass."

The Czar was now too certain, however, of the trick that had been played upon him.

Strove to strangle his victim.

"I will not drink!" he shouted. "Traitors! murderers! I am poisoned! You have come hither to destroy me!"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Orloff brusquely. "Your Majesty must be mad. Teploff, let us pledge the Emperor in another glass."

The callous wretch actually poured out another bumper of brandy for his fellow-conspirator, and one for himself.

"To your Majesty's most gracious welfare," he said, "and a long life with the beautiful Countess Woronzow in the cheerful Duchy of Holstein."

At that both Teploff and the arch-villain burst into a boisterous fit of laughter; but Peter now, being in desperate agony, shouted and screamed aloud for help.

His French valet-de-chambre, who was about the only person in his entourage who had not been suborned, rushed into the apartment.

"Bring me milk—milk!" yelled the unhappy Czar. "Do you not see that I am dying?"

The Frenchman cast a reproachful glance at the conspirators. "Gentlemen," he began, but Orloff, throwing off the mask at last, seized the menial by the shoulders and thrust him from the room.

The Emperor was standing by the table, holding on to it with one hand, while the other was lifted high aloft. Big beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead, while his countenance had assumed an ashen tint, with great black circles around his blazing eyes. His body swayed backwards and forwards, and when he spoke, his utterance was thick and husky.

"It was not enough, then," he panted, "to prevent me from reigning over Sweden, and to deprive me of the Crown of Russia. I must also be put to death."

Orloff, seeing that he was now powerless, hurled the unfortunate Peter to the ground, and kneeling upon his chest, strove to strangle his victim with his hand. Peter was not yet dead, however, and in his death throes struggled most valiantly. Teploff stood aside, looking on at the dreadful deed which was being perpetrated, but did not seek to aid one way or the other.

Hearing the noise, the Baratins Rys, who were in the secret, entered the room, and finding Orloff almost overpowered by the dying man, to whom the approach of death appeared to lend a supernatural strength, they drew forth a cloth, and wrapping it around the Emperor's throat, suffocated him in a few minutes.

It has always been a moot point what hand Catherine had in the removal of her undesired and undesirable husband. The Princess Dashkow deprecates the Empress's knowledge of the assassination entirely; but if Catherine were unaware of what was about to take place beforehand, there can be little doubt as to her being an accessory after the fact, and as to her endeavours to hush the matter up.

After the murder the Empress was in her palace at St. Petersburg entertaining a large party of nobles. On her right hand sat Gregory Orloff, the chosen one for the nonce, but before long to be dethroned, for Catherine's loves were many. Her heart was light, and her smiles diffused a radiance all about her. Her eye glistened with gaiety, and a suspicion of something stronger than eau sucré. Her laugh sounded louder than any in the room, and her rosy cheeks presented a remarkable contrast to her powdered hair.

Suddenly, in the midst of the wildest mirth and revelry, a wild, fierce figure entered the apartment. His dress was torn and bespattered, his hair was all dishevelled, and hung in loose wisps upon his forehead, his eyes were bloodshot and glaring, and his countenance was white as the foam upon the seashore when a storm is lashing the waters.

Catherine caught his glance, and a look of intelligence passed between them. She gave him a covert signal, and in a few minutes followed him from the banqueting hall.

That man was Alexis Orloff, straight from the murdered corpse of the woman's husband.

Catherine saw him alone, but what passed at that interview will never be known.

The Princess Dashkow asserts that among the Empress's papers was found a letter from Alexis Orloff, an incoherent, drunken epistle, confessing the murder, and imploring pardon for the deed, but the Princess was a far from impartial writer, and her statement must be taken with a more than ordinary grain of salt. She was a special favourite of the Court, and defended her imperial mistress with a zeal which was sometimes almost ludicrous from its evident bias.

At all events, the occurrences which followed the death of the Emperor give a strong colour to the general opinion that the Empress was all along cognisant of the murder of her husband, if it had not, indeed, been instigated by her. She sent for Count Panin, and gave him orders as to what was to be done.

Peter's body was brought to St. Petersburg, where it lay in state for three days. The face was black, and the tongue protruded from the mouth, hideous and swollen. On the neck was a tell-tale abrasion, and the whole appearance was that of death by strangulation. Nevertheless, it was given out that the Czar had died of hæmorrhoidal colic, and the doctors certified to that effect. The people were sceptical, but silent, and in a few days Catherine was crowned Empress in her own right, amid much pomp and splendour.

The Holstein guards were immediately disbanded, and sent back on their way to their own homes, but a storm arising in the Baltic, the greater number of that favoured body of Peter's soldiery were drowned, and nobody in Russia was sorry.

So perished the grandson of Peter the Great at the early age of thirty-four, having reigned upon the throne of his grandsire only for the short period of six months.

That he was a weak and vulgar man nobody will deny, but whether he was at heart a bad man or no is a matter which history will probably never be able to decide.

The Ballymote Tragedy.

How a Ruthless Murderer slew the two Callaghans and their servant, and got Drunk with the Spoil.

"No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head."

—SHAKESPEARE, "Hamlet," Act I., Scene 5.

AT the commencement of the year 1861 that quiet and orderly town of Ballymote, in county Sligo, was thrown into a state of intense excitement in consequence of the commission there of three murders of a peculiarly aggravated and atrocious character.

Residing in Ballymote, and keeping a small shop, there were an aged couple, named Callaghan. William Callaghan, the husband, was a man of over four-score years, and bedridden. His wife, Fanny, was also well stricken in years, but still able to get about. There was also in the house a young servant girl.

William Callaghan was a steady, well-conducted old man, highly respected by all his neighbours and those who knew him, as was also old Mrs. Callaghan. It was, moreover, well known in the vicinity that Callaghan had all his life been a very careful and thrifty, not to say penurious, man, and there was a general belief that he kept "an old stocking" and was unmistakably "warm."

The more careful members of the peasant and lower classes generally of the Green Isle of that date kept, as a rule, their humble savings hidden somewhere about their cottages or cabins. For this we cannot censure them. There were not the facilities for safe investment that are common now. Canny folks had to hoard their savings in the best way they could in Sligo.

On January 9 of the year named fairly early customers to the Callaghans' little shop found it closed. Bearing in mind the age and affliction of the old couple, it did not appear remarkable that they were not early risers; but then there was the servant girl, who surely might have been up, the lazy huzzy!

Later calls by the same customers and others all had the same result. Callaghan's house and shop remained closed, and the loudest knocking elicited no response.

At length public curiosity became aroused.

A small party of customers and neighbours assembled before the shop, and first one and another stepped forward and knocked and kicked at the door, their efforts becoming more and more forceful with delay.

"See that, Hogan?" cried a woman, for the little crowd was made up of both sexes. As she spoke she pointed to an upstairs casement which was flapping about in the wind.

"'Tis only a windy open, Mrs. Riley. What o' that?"

"'Tis the girleen's window—Anne's!"

"Well, what o' that?"

"She or someone must be about."

"Why, thin?"

"Sure, the girl didn't sleep with the windy open a cold January like the last night!"

"An' look there!" cried another. "Blessed Virgin! sure there's a bloody hand!" And he pointed at some smears on the while wall just below the open casement.

"Arrah, be aisy wid ye!" cried Hogan, a big, burly young peasant "I'm going in to see what is the matter."

"I'M GOING IN TO SEE WHAT IS THE MATTER."

And applying his brawny shoulder to the door, he burst it open.

The little crowd swarmed excitedly into the shop.

Finding nothing visible there, Mrs. Riley ascended the stairs. Immediately a shrill scream rang out, followed by a heavy fall.

Pushing and shoving each other in wild excitement, the folks present trooped to the rooms above. In the first one they found Mrs. Riley lying insensible on the floor, and on his bed the corpse of poor old Callaghan himself, the bed-clothes saturated in blood, and the old man's throat cut from ear to ear.

With exclamations of horror, some crowded round the bed, whilst others set to restoring Mrs. Riley.

When this was accomplished, her first words were:

"Where is the old girl? Where is Mrs. Callaghan? And where is Anne?"

Anne was the little maid-servant.

Presently, peeping under the counter, Hogan saw the dead body of the old woman and drew it forth. Her throat

The discovery of the servant's body.

had also been cut in the same ferocious manner as had her husband's, and she, like him, was drenched in blood.

Further search resulted in the discovery of the servant's body in the yard against the stable door. The poor child had been slain in the same manner as the old couple, and her head was nearly severed from her body.

"Howly saints defend us!" cried a woman of the party. "'Tis a most cruel and bloody murder was done here last night."

"An' 'tis the true word that ye spake, Mrs. Doolan," responded Mrs. Riley. "And for what should anyone want to murder an unoffending old man and woman and a poor bit of a colleen?"

"Faith, then, ye needn't ask that same. 'Twas common talk that Callaghan had a nate little nest-egg laid by."

"Can we find out?"

"Look here!" cried the rough voice of Hogan, "don't touch a thing. Tim"—this to a boy who was of the party—"go down to the barrack, and let the constabulary know there's been bloody murder done at Callaghan's, and they'd better come over and take possession of the place. I'll wait till they come."

The boy hastened off, and soon returned with the officials.

Hogan told his story and pointed out to the policemen that on the table beside Callaghan's bed there were two bottles, and that they both smelt of whiskey.

* * * * * *

There was no little wondering conjecture and head-shaking in Ballymote that day and for some short time after, as may readily be assumed.

Nevertheless, the key to the mystery of the blood-flooded dwelling was not far to seek.

It appeared that a certain Matthew Phipps (or Phibb) had taken the house and shop next door to old Mr. Callaghan's place some time before. He was not an industrious or business-like man, and his trade did not flourish. So, after a time, Phipps landed himself into bankruptcy, and quitted Ballymote.

It would, however, appear that this Phipps had quite recently revisited the little town, for on Monday, January 7, he was seen entering Callaghan's shop.

The next day Phipps went into a butcher's shop in Sligo to purchase a neck of mutton. He desired the butcher to send the meat to the Imperial Hotel in that town and paid three shillings and sixpence for his purchase.

The butcher noticed that the money was marked with blood, but imagined that it had come in contact with some of the raw meat in his shop.

The butcher sent his boy with Phipps to carry the mutton. The lad at once found that his companion was very drunk, for Phipps fell down three times before the hotel was reached, and he did not arise after his last tumble. The boy very sensibly called a constable, who happened to be near, and suggested that it would be well to take the "gentleman" to the barracks, for he was manifestly so drunk as to be incapable of taking care of himself, and he (the boy) had seen him take a handful of gold and silver out of his pockets in the butcher's shop.

So the constable took Phipps into his kind care, and at the station they found £37 in notes on him, besides other money. It was noticed that some of the notes were stained, apparently by blood.

Phipps was locked up for the night, and released next morning, his money being returned to him.

The news of the tragedy at Ballymote reached Sligo just after. A pursuit of Phipps was immediately set on foot, and a mounted constable found the man, hopelessly drunk, at a little place not far from Sligo.

Phipps was charged on suspicion with the Ballymote murders, and was committed to the next assizes.

At the Spring Assizes at Sligo, opening on March 8, before the Hon. Justice Fitzgerald, Matthew Phipps was arraigned for the wilful murder of William and Fanny Callaghan and Anne Mooney.

Beside the evidence proving he had been seen to go into Callaghan's and the episode of the blood-stained notes, it was proved that he had been seen to tear up some paper and throw it away. The fragments were part of an envelope addressed to Callaghan.

The case occupied a very considerable time, 39 witnesses having been examined, the proceedings not terminating till seven o'clock in the evening.

The jury were taken to an hotel for the night under the charge of a sheriff. Upon the Court assembling next morning, however, the foreman stated decisively that there was no chance of the jury coming to an agreement, and they were discharged.

At a subsequent trial, however, a verdict of "Wilful Murder" was returned against the cowardly and blood-thirsty miscreant, and Matthew Phipps duly expiated his crime on the scaffold.

An Echo.

PARSONS, the Irish barrister, was rarely at the loss for a quip or crank, and it is recorded of him that when engaged in a case on circuit before Lord Norbury he succeeded in distinctly scoring off the latter legal luminary. During his Lordship's address, an ass outside the court brayed so loudly that no one could hear the pearls of wisdom falling from the judicial lips, and he exclaimed testily, "Do stop that noise." Parsons said with great gravity, "My lord, there is evidently a great echo about the court."

The Gentle Art of Tickling.

HENRY ERSKINE, the Scotch advocate, was once defending a client of the name of Tickell, and when the lady entered the witness box to give her evidence, he smilingly introduced her to the judge, saying "Tickell, my client, my lord." His lordship, who though a Scotchman, joked "wi'out deefficulty," interrupted him by exclaiming, "Tickle her yourself, Harry; you are as able to do it as I am!"

Criminal Problems

THE CRIMINAL LUNATIC.

ONE of the most difficult problems which confront the student of criminology is that which deals with the best method of disposing of those members of the community who fall under the ban of our criminal laws through mental deficiency. To treat those who have broken the law, but who were unable at the time of the committal of the offence to distinguish between right and wrong, as criminals, is, of course, unjust; to treat a very large number of those classed as criminal lunatics as insane would be inhuman, for it would tend to further develop their mental disease.

Our criminal lunatics may be broadly divided into two great classes; those who have a tendency to commit crimes not dangerous to life, such as kleptomaniacs, and those who develop suicidal or homicidal manias at times.

The first division will be found to contain a very large number of perfectly curable cases, for the malady from which the unfortunate victims suffer is often the result of mental shock, of sudden reverses, or of alcoholism. Were they treated exactly as lunatics in ordinary asylums, they would probably deteriorate, becoming confirmed idiots, whereas with healthy employment, lack of strain, good food and cheerful surroundings, there is every probability of their being fully restored to reason and becoming useful members of the State. The present tendency to confine them in the same establishments as are occupied by lunatics of the second class is detrimental to their recovery. They know that a large number of their fellows are under restraint for deeds of violence, and this preys upon their minds—lunatics are generally nervous—and thus cure is delayed temporarily, if not permanently. Seclusion in some bracing spot, with suitable environment, and strict attention to elevating employment and moral training will, in most cases, effect a cure. Dipsomaniacs, of course, require more individual treatment; firstly, to break down the craving for alcohol, and then to strengthen the character to resist future temptation.

The homicidal lunatic is far less hopeful. It is said that those with purely suicidal tendencies can be cured, but it is very doubtful if the germ is ever totally eradicated. Cheerful surroundings, absence of worry, and especially of the cause which led to the attempt at suicide, may do much, but there is always a great danger of the malady returning, and the second attempt being unsuccessful. The purely homicidal lunatic must be divided into two sections. The first contains all men and those woman who have manifested a desire to kill adults. These may, for all practical purposes, be considered as incurable, and should never be permitted to regain their freedom. If true mania led them to take life once, it will probably cause them to do so a second time, even though many years have elapsed between the two crimes. At the same time it must be remembered that they are not criminals, and their treatment should be of the kindest, and their surroundings suited to the rank of life which they occupied when at liberty. It seems harsh to consign these to perpetual seclusion, but it must be done in the interests of the community, though that retirement should be made as pleasant as possible for the afflicted persons.

In the second section of homicidal lunatics will be found those women who, during the period of child-bearing, have developed a mania for infanticide. This may be solely due to puerperal mania, following directly on confinement, and as such is perfectly curable; or it may be due to hysteric affections, influencing the whole nervous system, a species of lunacy which is also frequently amenable to treatment.

These patients require the most careful handling. Anything which is liable to excite them must be avoided, and the rules of general health rigorously attended to. Their likes and dislikes must be studied, for often a homicidal woman of this class will take a violent dislike to a particular nurse, or a fellow-patient, and, unless removed from the presence of these people, her recovery will be greatly retarded. As a rule, the acute form of this type of lunacy passes off rapidly, and, to all appearances, the woman is perfectly sane. This has led to many lamentable accidents, for women have been discharged as cured, and shortly afterwards have returned to the asylum with another murder added to their record. This leads us to think that the foreign regulation which ordains that no female criminal lunatic, with a tendency to homicide, shall be released from the asylum until at least a year has passed from the time when she becomes incapable of bearing children, and even then not unless four years of complete freedom from any form of insanity have elapsed.

To obtain the best results with this class of lunatic, the present system of confining them in large establishments is not the most effective. Small asylums, embodying a more family type of life, are believed to give the best results, though, of course, the expense of maintaining such institutions is great. This difficulty could be overcome to a great extent by making those who are able contribute to the cost of the asylums in which they are confined. Under any circumstances, however, the State is bound to employ the method which gives promise of the highest efficiency, without considering the question of expense. If a reasonable percentage of those who are afflicted can be converted into healthy, right-minded citizens, then no pecuniary difficulties should be allowed to stand in the way of their cure.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

The Dead Hand.

THE criminal has always been a strong believer in the supernatural, and his faith in charms and incantations still exists. He does not, however, trust so much in them as did his predecessors. Among the charms which were most popular among the thieving fraternity as late as the middle of the last century, the Dead Hand certainly holds the chief place. It was firmly believed by all orthodox criminals that to possess the hand of a person who had died a violent death endowed one with the power to send others to sleep. A lighted candle placed on a "dead hand" was also supposed to be invisible to all but the possessor of the talisman. We have an authentic record of the use of this ghastly charm in co. Meath in the last century, where some burglars, alarmed by the awakening of the household, fled, leaving their "dead hand" and candle behind them.

A Proof of Civilisation!

THAT our ancestors considered hanging in chains far from revolting may be gathered from the following passage extracted from a "Proof of Civilisation," a rare work published towards the end of the seventeenth century, and alluded to by Swift. "After having walked eleven hours without having traced the print of the human foot, to my great comfort and delight, I saw a man hanging upon a gibbet; my pleasure at the cheering prospect was inexpressible, for it convinced me that I was in a civilised country." This relates to a real incident in Sir Francis Drake's voyage (about A.D. 1577), in the account of which he says that he was much comforted by finding, somewhere on the coast of Patagonia, a gibbet standing, "a proof that Christian people had been there before them!"

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

AIME.—The Girondists formed a party in the French Revolution of 1789. Many of them were sent to the guillotine.

POPPITE.—You are better off now than in Saxon times when the legal Sunday commenced at 3 p.m. on Saturday.

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